

a quarter mile higher up, using the old factory for storing bulky goods. The Mughal Governor lived in Hooghly proper, and a large bazar lay between. It was in this bazar that on 28th October 1686, the quarrel arose between the English soldiers and Mughal peons which compelled Charnock to fight with the Mughal Governor and, later on, to give up Hooghly as his head-quarters. In this fight the old factory was burnt down. The portion south of the fort was thickly peopled, and the English are said to have burnt down four to five hundred houses during their attack on the battery and the Governor's house.*

After the war Charnock settled at Sutānūtī (in August 1690), and the English factory at Golghāt was practically abandoned. The New Company ("the English Company") had its headquarters at Golghāt for some time; but after amalgamation with the old Company, it left Golghāt for Calcutta in 1704. The Golghāt factory then gradually went out of repair. A private English merchant, called in those days an "adventurer," visited the factory towards the end of 1712 and left the following description of it:—"Golgutt, an English factory, subordinate under Calcutta, is seated in the city of Hugley on the banks of the river, it here forming itself into a Cove, being deep-water ships' riding 16 and 18 fathom not a stone's cast off shore. Being landed and ascended the bank, you enter the factory through a large gate, beautified and adorned with pillars and cornices in the Chenum work; and on the top of all is the flagstaff fixed into the brick work, whereon they hoist St. George's flag. Being entered the gate you come into a Viranda for the guard; you ascend into the house by steps, having under it two square cellars with staircases to descend. The hall is indifferent large; besides two indifferent apartments with chimneys, there are other rooms and closets in the house, the whole consisting but of one story. Behind the house is a garden, in which grows nothing but weeds, in the middle is an ugly well and at one corner upon the wall is built a round sort of a building like a sentry box, but much larger. You ascend it by a narrow Chenum staircase, which has no rails or fence to keep you from tumbling into the garden, and when entered you see nothing worth observation. Having a door, but never a window tho', it yields an excellent echo, it being contrived, as I have been informed, as a magazine for powder.

"At the end of the garden are the ruins of several apartments, the roofs being fallen in, and indeed all the out-houses are in the

like condition, of which there are several. You may ascend to the top of the factory by an old wooden staircase, which is well terras'd with seats all round and a small oblong place included by itself, from whence you have a prospect of the river. To conclude, it is an old, ugly, ill-contrived edifice, wherein is not the least spark of beauty, form, or order to be seen, being seated in a dull melancholy hole enough to give one the Hippocondria by one seeing it. The Company have no factor at present that is resident here, being left in the charge of a Molly and two or three Punes, though in truth it is hardly worth looking after". Next year (April 1713) the building was abandoned by the English, as it was found that it would cost as much to repair as it was worth, and that it would be impossible to prevent it being washed away by the river †

When the Marathas first invaded Bengal (1741), and forced Ali Vardi to retire from Burdwan, their ally Mir Habib captured the Hooghly fort. Sib Rao, a Maratha, was installed as Governor; but when Bhāskar Pandit was defeated, he evacuated the fort and retreated to Bishnupur ‡. In the war with Sirāj-ud daula, the fort was attacked by the English both by land and water on 10th January 1757, and was captured by assault. From the descriptions given in the English records§ the Mughal fort appears to have been quadrangular in shape with a bastion at each corner. The English ships attacked it from the river side and made a breach near the south-east bastion. The main gate lay on the land side towards the south-west. The sepoys made a false attack on it between 2 and 3 A.M., and this feint drew most of the defenders there. Taking advantage of this, the sailors mounted to the breach on scaling ladders and entered the fort followed by the sepoys and English soldiers. The Mughal garrison retreated through the north-east gate. South of the fort were many houses, in one of which the sepoys and soldiers waited till the breach was effected. This house belonged to Khwājā Wajid, a rich Armenian merchant of Hooghly, who had the high-sounding title of *Fakhr-ul-ujjar*, glory of merchants. The fort was demolished on 16th January, after which the English re-embarked for Calcutta.

From these accounts it seems evident that the Mughal fort lay entirely within Hooghly proper, was very much smaller than the Portuguese port, and had no moats. This conclusion is

* O. R. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 285-6.

† Wilson, II, p. 114.

‡ *Atyasa-e-Salatin* (transl. 1904), pp. 342-3, 347.

§ *Bengal in 1756-57*, I, 201; III, 12, 16, 18, 26, 42-3.

corroborated by Tieffenthaler's sketch of Hooghly Bander (1785), which shows a small quadrangular fort with bastions at each corner (but no gates) situated on the river bank at some distance from the Bandel ditch. On the bank south of the fort two houses are shown, the larger one, which was double-storeyed, being probably Khwājā Wajid's. To the east of the fort ran a wide road lined on both sides with houses. The Mughal fort therefore occupied the site between the Imāmbāra and the Bālī drain.

In the early days of British rule the *Faujdar* Khanjahan Khān lived within the fort in a splendid house. In 1770 Stavorinus wrote.—“It (the fort) is not very defensible, and has little worthy of observation within it except the house of the Fausdar and the stables for the elephants.” On account of the princely style in which he lived, his name passed into a proverb, “*Betā jeno Nawāb Khān, ā Khān*,” i.e., “the fellow has as many airs as if he were Nawāb Khanjahan Khān.” The post of *Faujdar* was abolished by Lord Cornwallis, but he was allowed to live within the fort. In 1809 the Government advanced Rs. 8,000 to him for the repairs of the various buildings inside the fort, and these buildings were not given up by his family till August 1821 after his death. In 1823, a gang of prisoners was employed to pull down the fort and the *Faujdar's* residence and to level the ground; the materials were sold for Rs. 2,000. With its demolition all trace of the Mughal fort disappeared.

Hooghly was a favourite resort of well-to-do Europeans of Calcutta during the early days of British rule, and the old *Calcutta Gazette* contains several advertisements of houses to let at Hooghly, Bandel and Chinsura. These places, in fact, were looked upon as suburban retreats by the Europeans in Calcutta. Mr. and Mrs. Motte, friends of Warren Hastings and his wife Marian, used to live in Hooghly, where their residence was known as “Hooghly House”; Hastings' wife frequently came up the river to stay with them. Mrs. Grand also lived for some time at Hooghly, after her divorce, under the protection of Philip Francis, who sent her to the house of his cousin, Major Baggs.

Ward III contains Ghutiābazar, Pipalpānti and Bābujanj. Ghutiā-
basar. The jail is the northernmost building within this ward, and south of it comes Ghutiābazar, a crowded quarter, largely inhabited by that well-to-do caste, the Subarnabāniks. They belong to the section known as Suptagrāmiya, and are said to have migrated from Sātgaon some 300 years ago. South of Ghutiābasar is Tamlipara, and still further south are Bābujanj

and Pratāppur, all lying along the river bank and west of the Strand Road, which runs between them and the river.

Pipalpati. To the west lies the more important quarter of Pipalpati, so called from the rows of tall *pipal* trees that line the roads. It is traversed by the Cockerell, Pankhātuli, and Pipalpāti roads, near the junction of which there is a police outpost; a little north of it is the municipal office. Close by are the houses of Rai Ishān Chandra Mīttra Bahādur and of his brother, Bābu Mahendra Chandra Mīttra, the late and present Government pleaders of Hooghly. At the southern extremity Mallik Kasim's *hāt* is held on Thursdays and Sundays. It is the largest market in the town, a large trade in rice and paddy, pulses and potatoes, being carried on. The *hāt*, which stands on the trust property of the Chinsura Imāmbāra, is probably named after Mallik Kāsim, Governor of Hooghly from 1668 to 1672, whose garden is shown just outside the town in a Dutch map of Hooghly dated 1679.*

Chinsura. Passing on to the south, one comes to Chinsura, which extends along the river from Jorāghāt (*i.e.*, double *ghāt*) southward to the ditch and boundary pillars separating French Chandernagore from British territory. The northern part of it is situated in Ward No. IV, which also contains Barabazar. Barabazar is the name given to the quarter along the river bank through which the Strand Road runs. On the river-side are a number of large houses with high revetments, not the least prominent among which is the house of the late Bhudev Chandra Mukherji, c.i.e., a noted educationist. West of the Strand Road are Armenitola, Mughaltuli, and Feringhitola, names reminiscent of the Mughal and early British days, when the trade of Chinsura flourished.

In the Mughaltuli lane is an Imāmbāra founded by a rich Persian merchant of Chinsura named Hāji Karbalai Muhanmad, who in 1801 executed a trust deed endowing the Imāmbāra with *lakhirāj* property at Kāsimpur (now Mallik Kāsim's *hāt*) and Bānsberia. Hāji Karbalai died in 1804, and his Imāmbāra is now in a dilapidated condition.

Armenian and Catholic Churches. In Armenitola are the Armenian and Roman Catholic Churches. Next to the Portuguese Church at Bandel, the Armenian Church is the oldest Christian Church in Bengal, being begun in 1695 and completed in 1697 by Khwaja Joseph Margar. It is dedicated to St. John the Baptist, of whom there is a large oil-painting over the altar at the east end. The feast of St. John on 26th January is largely attended by the Armenian community of Calcutta. Attached to the church is a cemetery with many

* Bowrey, note 1, p. 136.

tombs, the oldest being that of Khwaja Johanness Margar, father of the founder. In his epitaph he is described in Armenian as "the famous Kharib (*i. e.*, foreigner) Khojah Johanness, the son of Margar, an Armenian from Julfa in the country of Shosh. He was a considerable merchant, honoured with the favour of Kings and of their Viceroy. He was handsome and amiable and had travelled north, south, east and west, and died suddenly at the City of Hooghly in Hindustan on the 27th November 1697, and delivered up his soul into the hands of the Angel and rested here in a foreign land seeking his home." The Roman Catholic Church was completed in 1740, chiefly from funds bequeathed by Mrs. Sebastian Shaw.

In Feringhitola, which is probably so called after the Feringis or Portuguese, is a house of the Burdwan Rāj, and near the latter is the Hooghly thana. West of these lies Khāgrajol, evidently so called from a *jol* or channel bordered by *khāgra* reeds; the channel has dried up, but the adjoining lands are low and somewhat waterlogged. In Khāgrajol, Nasratullah Khān, cousin of Nawāb Khānjahān, built a large house (now in ruins) and a mosque, which is in a state of disrepair, with an inscription dated 1239 of the Bengali year (1832 A. D.). He further excavated several tanks in the neighbourhood, the largest of which goes by the name of Motijhil, probably in imitation of the well-known Motijhil of Murshidābād. Nasratullah's tomb lies in front of the mosque.

Further west lies the European cemetery on a road called after it Gorastān road. It was originally the old Dutch cemetery and was added to after the cession of the Dutch settlement in 1825. The oldest grave with a legible epitaph is that of Sir Cornelius Jonge, who died on 10th October 1743 and the oldest English grave is that of Lieutenant Dent (June 1782). Among other tombs, may be mentioned those of Nathaniel Forsyth (1816), "the first faithful and zealous Protestant minister in Chinsura," of Daniel Overbeck, the last Dutch Governor (1840), and of his son (1831), which has a pathetic epitaph stating that "his father envies him his grave." The massive tombs or mausoleums, so common in the burial grounds of the 18th century, in some instances contain coffins, which were placed in the brickwork and not buried.*

Ward V, at present the most important part of the municipality, extends south of the fourth ward. It contains the greater part of Chinsura proper, with Kharuābazar, Kāmārpārā and Chānāthā, and has a large *maiden* (in front of the courts). On the river bank, east of the Strand road, lie the Free Church

* An interesting account of the cemetery will be found in "Old Chinsura: The Garden of Eden," *Bombay Past and Present*, January 1906.

Mission buildings and school, which are separated by a part of the *maidan* from the house of the Commissioner. The latter is a large double-storeyed house with a fine staircase, on which is a tablet bearing the date 1687 and a monogram composed of the letters O. V. C. : these letters stand for "Ostindische Vereenigde Compagnie," i.e., the United East India Company. The same monogram appears on the copper coinage issued by the Dutch.*

This is believed to be the house which Stavorinus described as erected by Mr. Sichterman, the Dutch Governor, about the year 1744. The gallery with a double row of pillars projecting over the water, and the "elegant terrace and balcony, which commands the finest prospect at Chinsura" have now disappeared, and so have the gardens "delightfully shady and pleasant." The "mole projecting into the river," which was mentioned by Hodges in 1780-81, can still be traced, however, as well as the remains of revetments on the river bank. To the south of the house is a long two-storeyed building, which used to be the officers' barracks; it is now occupied by the Civil Surgeon, the Superintendent of Police, and others, and some of the rooms are reserved for use as a Circuit-House and Station Club.

The
Dutch
Church

Opposite the officers' barracks stands the old Dutch Church, now the English Protestant Church. It is octagonal in shape and has an altar at the north end. A Latin inscription records the fact that it was built by Sir G. Vernet, the Dutch Director, in 1767. Before this, however, in 1744, a steeple with a clock is said to have been erected by another Governor, Sichterman, thus, according to Mr. Marshman, "reminding us of the popular remark that the Frenchman invented the frill and the Englishman added the skirt." The steeple fell down in the cyclone of 5th October 1864. Round the walls are hung hatchments with the arms and epitaphs of some Dutch Governors and other officers with their wives, the oldest being that of W. A. (1662), and Rogier Van Heyningen (1665).

Hooghly
College.

Further on is the Hooghly College, a fine double-storeyed building within a large compound, which is walled in on three sides and has the river on the east; the garden contains plants which have been cultivated from the time when Dr. Watt was Professor of Botany here. The building has several large rooms, in one of which there is a valuable library, and a broad flight of steps down to the river.

The college was established from the accumulated surplus of the Mohsin Fund, and, according to a stone tablet in the entrance

*Col. D. G. Crawford, I.M.S., *Brief History of the English District* (1903).

"A large slab of grey granite, which is still extant, was recently lying in the outer entrance to the naqqat court, and has now been set up in the Commissioner's house. It is presumably one of the stones which were placed over the fort gates.

hall was opened on 1st August 1836. The present building was occupied in 1837, having been bought, with three *bighas* of land, between March and July of that year. It was built by M. Perron, the French General of Scindia,* who resided at Chandernagore for a year and a half (1803-05) after his surrender to Lord Lake and before his departure for Europe. Subsequently it came into the possession of Bābu Prānkissen Haldār, a zamindār, who used to give nautches and entertainments in it, and who in 1828 contributed Rs. 13,000 for a masonry bridge over the Saraswati at Tribeni. He was ultimately convicted of forgery and sentenced to transportation for fourteen years. The Seal family of Chinsura (now represented by Bābu Brajendra Kumār Seal, a retired District Judge), had lent him money on a mortgage of the house, and when it was sold at an auction sale of the civil court in 1834, bought it up. The Seals sold it in 1837 to Government for Rs. 20,000. The Muhammadan pupils have a hostel in a large block south of the college, while the Hindu students live in a hostel, erected in 1903, on the extreme south of the *maidān* and in several hired houses near the courts.

About half a mile from the college is the temple of Shāndeswar. This is a small temple of Siva, the Lord of Bulls, situated on the bank of the Hooghly within a walled enclosure. In this enclosure a *melā* or religious fair is held in the month of Baisākh (middle of April to middle of May). The worshippers bathe in the Ganges, and then pour Ganges water on the *linga*, which is 1½ foot high. Only Brahmans are allowed to pour water in person, Sūdras employing Brahman proxies on payment of a few pice. The shrine is fairly old, being mentioned in a Bengali poem of the eighteenth century.†

Turning back and passing along the western side of the Strand Road, we come to the *maidān*, the old parade ground of the troops, which is bounded on the north by three barracks. The main barrack runs east and west for about 300 yards, and has an imposing effect. The eastern end of the upper storey forms the residence of the District Judge; with this exception, the whole building is occupied by Government offices and courts. The rooms below the Judge's residence, and a few rooms beyond it in the upper and lower floors are occupied by the office of the Commissioner; the long suite of rooms in the middle is occupied

* The *Calcutta Gazette* of 10th October 1805 contains an advertisement offering for sale "the house at Chinsura, now nearly finished, built by order of General Perron, leaving for Europe."

† *Bhārat-varishat-patrikā*, Vol. VIII, p. 62.

by the criminal courts and the Collectorate and magisterial offices, the treasury being located in the lower storey; five or six rooms next to them on the upper storey are allotted to the District Board; while the suite of rooms at the western end is occupied by the civil courts and the office of the District Judge.

On the cession of Chinsura by the Dutch, this barrack was constructed in order to accommodate troops on first landing. Two tablets affixed to the middle of the upper storey on the south and the north walls give some details of its construction. That on the south records that it was begun in January 1827 by Lieutenant J. A. C. Crommelin, Executive Engineer, and was completed in December 1829 by Captain William Bell, Artillery Executive Officer; while that on the north (in Bengali) mentions the names of the masons, Rāmhari S rkar and Sheikh Tanu Dafadar. This building was occupied by the troops until 1871, when all the barracks were vacated by the Military Department.

In the north-east corner, at right angles to the main building, is another barrack that runs north and south nearly parallel to the river and the Strand Road. It formed part of the Dutch barracks, and is the oldest of all the barracks. It is a two-storeyed building and has two racquet courts at the north end. It was occupied for some time by the post office and the Hindu hostel, but since 1901 it has been occupied by a company of the Military Police.

At the north end of the court compound there are several other buildings, one of which, near the racquet courts, accommodates a club for Indian officers and others, which is named after Mr. F. W. Duke, I.C.S., C.S.I., sometime District Magistrate of Hooghly. To the west of this, beyond the Cutcherry Road, comes a block of buildings, containing the Imāmbāra hospital, and the Lady Dufferin Female Hospital. Close to the Civil Courts at the western end of the compound is the Bar Library. South of the main barrack is a fine tank reserved for drinking water. West of the Court compound is another barrack which was originally a hospital for the troops and is now occupied by the police and the police offices. To the west of the police barrack is Kharuā Bazar, probably so called from the large quantity of straw (*thar*) that used to be sold there; this is now the most important bazar in the town. Opposite the police office is the Free Mission Church and girls' school.

Beyond the *maidān* are Kāmārpārā (on the west) and Chau-māthā (on the south), two quarters inhabited by *shakhs* *lok*, including several Subarnabank families, such as Shaks, Mandals,

Lahās and Mallikā. Among other, may be mentioned the Shom family and the family of the Calcutta merchants, Biswanāth Lahā and Co.

At the extreme western boundary, of this ward, near the 25th mile of the Grand Trunk Road is a large Dutch tomb. It is an arched chamber, 15 feet high, with a dome and steeple. Round the dome are inscribed in large letters the name and the date of death viz., Susanah Anna Maria Yeates, who died on 12th May 1809. She bequeathed Rs. 4,000 as a trust fund, the interest of which was to be expended on the maintenance of her tomb, and the surplus, if any, given to the Chinsura Poor Fund. She also bequeathed a garden, named Ayesha Bāg, to be used as a burial ground for Europeans.

The Dutch occupied Chinsura from 1656 to 1725. In 1656 Old Chin-
sura. they founded Fort Gustavus, of which the following description is given by Schouten, who visited Chinsura in 1665. "There is nothing in it (Hooghly) more magnificent than the Dutch factory. It was built on a great space at the distance of a musket shot from the Ganges, for fear that, if it were nearer, some inundation of the waters of this river might endanger it, or cause it to fall. It has, indeed, more the appearance of a large castle than of a factory of merchants. The walls are high and built of stone, and the fortifications are also covered with stone. They are furnished with cannon, and the factory is surrounded by ditches full of water. It is large and spacious. There are many rooms to accommodate the Director, the other officers who compose the Council, and all the people of the Company. There are large shops built of stone, where goods that are bought in the country, and those that our vessels bring there, are placed."

This account is confirmed by the English Agent, Streysham Master, who visited Chinsura on 21st November 1676 and wrote :—"Visited the Dutch at their factory, which is very large and well-built, with two quadrangles. The Directore was very obliging, and showed us the new built warehouses, which are three very large, that make one side of one of the quadrangles next to the Riverside. They are excellently well-timbered, which was all brought from the Coast. Alsoe he showed us other accommodations of their Factory, their gardens which are very spacious well kept with Terrass walks and full (of) Lattice and good herbage; and adjoyneing to their Factory they have offices for all things needful to them, as a Carpenters Yard with stores of good Timber brought from Batavia, a Cooper's yard where they make many casks for the Port, which they kill and salt up downe the river, a Smiths forge,

a Grannary and apartment for a great many weavers, where they have sett up Loomes for the weaving of saile cloth, and a foild to make ropes in." *

The sketch plant of Chinsura (1721) given in Du Bois' "Lives of the Governors-General of the Dutch East India Company" shows a quadrangular fort with two gates, one to the north and the other to the east on the riverside. Within the fort were various offices, houses of officers, tanks and gardens. Outside the fort a bazar lay to the north east, the flagstaff to the east on the river bank, gardens to the south and south-west, and a cemetery to the north-west †

When Stavorinus visited Chinsura (1770), the place had undergone many changes. The fort, an oblong in shape, 650 feet by 325 feet, had three gates, one by the river, another to the north, and the third to the south leading to the Company's garden, "in which there is neither a bush nor a blade of grass." The stone walls were about 15 feet high, but in a ruinous state. The cemetery to the west had been levelled and was occupied by a powder magazine, a new burial ground (the present European cemetery) being opened in another part of the town. In the south-east corner the Governor's house (the present Commissioner's house) and the Church (the present Protestant Church) had been built. Southwards, at a distance of more than a quarter of an hour's walk, Mr. Vernet had built a house for freemasons, called Concordia.

When the British took possession in 1825, the Dutch were found to have been paying the Mughal Government rent for the area of the fort (about 65 *bighās*), Chinsura and Mirzāpur. Not long afterwards, the stones of the fort wall were utilized to metal the town roads; and with the exception of the Dutch barrack and the present Commissioner's house, all the buildings inside the fort were dismantled to make room for the new barracks. The Church and the two cemeteries were made over to the Lord Bishop of Calcutta. Up to that time there was at every outlet of the town a gate guarded by police officers, whose duty it was to realize custom duties and to prevent the desertion of European sailors belonging to the Dutch ships. The tolls were abolished, but a place on the road near Taldāngā towards Chandernagore is still known as *toll-phatak* (toll-gate). At present, except for the Commissioner's house, the cemetery, the barracks, and some drains, no memorial of the Dutch rule is visible.

* * Bowrey, p. 169, note 1.

† It forms the frontpiece of 'Tegubee's Sketch of the Administration of Hooghly District.

Ward VI, south of the fifth ward, contains the British portion of Chandernagore, which is separated from the French portion by some roads and a lane. It is sparsely populated, and contains a police outpost. Along the river bank a long *char* has formed, which is Khās Mahāl property; it is farmed out to leasees, part of it being used for brick-fields. The *char* appears to be of some age, *babul* and other trees growing on it; but during the last two years (1908-09) it has rapidly cut away and almost all the *babul* trees have fallen into the river. Nand Kumār was present at a parade of the British army held by 'Live on the Chandernagore plain to the northward of 'Taldangy garden' on 23rd April 1757.*

The town appears to be decadent. Its population fell from 34,761 in 1872 to 29,383 in 1901, and was 28,916 in 1911; during the decade ending in 1902, the death-rate (50.42 per mille) nearly doubled the birth-rate (28.42). Very little of its old trade has survived, and it has no mills or factories. Hooghly suffers much from fever, and the inhabitants of Chinsura from cholera and bowel-complaints. A scheme for the establishment of water-works at a cost of about 4 lakhs has been mooted, but its initiation depends on the funds the municipality can provide. It may be added that Hooghly-Chinsura and French Chandernagore are the only places in Bengal proper outside Calcutta where plague has broken out in epidemic form. From January to May 1905, there were 254 cases, with 204 deaths, in Hooghly-Chinsura, and 223 cases, with 174 deaths, in French Chandernagore.†

Hooghly Subdivision.—The headquarters subdivision of the district lying between 22° 52' and 23° 14' north latitude and between 87° 58' and 88° 30' east longitude. It extends over the whole of the north of the district, and with an area of 442 square miles, it is the largest of the subdivisions. The land, which has been formed by the silt deposits of the Hooghly on the east and the Dāmodār on the west, is flat and alluvial, but has a slight rise towards the north and north-west. It is intersected by numerous channels and creeks, and there are numerous depressions, the remains of former river channels. Hence it is water-logged, and all the thanas are very malarious, the death-rate exceeding the birth-rate considerably. In the sixties and seventies of the 19th century Burdwan fever raged, carrying away a very large proportion—estimated at one third to more than a half—of the population. Though this fever has disappeared, the population has not increased, numbering 308,217 in 1881 and 308,715 in

* Bengal in 1756-57, p. 264.

† Indian Medical Gazette, October 1905.

1901. The land is, however, fertile and yields abundant crops of paddy (rice), pulses, potatoes, vegetables and jute.

Inchurā.—A village in Balāgarh thāna in the north-east of the Hooghly subdivision. It contains an outpost, is the junction of several roads and contains a District Board bungalow. It is, however, somewhat difficult of access, as the roads are mostly fair-weather tracks; the Panduā-Kālūā road is, however, a good metalled road. The old road from Tribeni to Kālūā and thence to Murahidābād passed by this village, and it is shown in Rennell's Atlas with the flag mark of a police station.

Janāi.—A large village in thāna Chanditalā of the Serampore subdivision, situated on the right bank of the old Saraswatī. It is connected with the Chanditalā station on the Howrah Sheakhālā Light Railway by a short branch line $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long. The village contains the residence of the zamīndār family of Mukherjis, once an influential family, but now in reduced circumstances, owing to partition and litigation. There is a High English School here, and the place has a local reputation for a species of sweetmeats called *manoharā*. About a mile off is Bakshā, also on the right bank of the Saraswatī, which contains a Navaratna temple of Raghunāth built in 1793 A. D., and a group of twelve temples, named Isācswar, built in 1780 by Bhawānī Charan Mitra.* Adjoining the group of temples is a fine tank with a broad *ghāt*. A *melā* is held here annually on the last day of the Bengali year in April.

Khānākul.—A large village in the Arāmbagh subdivision, situated on the right bank of the Kānā Dwārakeswar, in $22^{\circ} 43'$ N. and $87^{\circ} 52'$ E. It is the headquarters of a police station, and contains an out-door dispensary and High English school. It may be reached from Māyāpur (on the Old Benares road) by the Māyāpur-Jagatpur road, a *kutcha* fair-weather road; but the easiest route is (1) by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway from Howrah to Kolā (on the Rūpnārāyan); (2) by steamer on the Rūpnārāyan to Rānchak; and (3) by boat from Rānchak to Khānākul. On account of the Beguā breach, a large quantity of the Dāmodar water has been passing through the lower part of the Kānā Dwārakeswar of late years and has deepened this part of the channel. It is now navigable by boats of considerable size for several miles beyond Khānākul; and a large temple of Ghāntarwar Siva, standing on the river bank, is in danger of being cut away by the deepened stream.

Khānākul is the centre of a considerable trade in brass-ware, inferior cotton fabrics, silk threads and cloths, rice and vegetables. The *āst* at Khānākul is the largest in the subdivision.

* M. M. Chakravarti, *Bengal Temples*, J. A. S. B., 1909, pp. 144-5, fig. 6.

The manufacture of cotton and silk fabrics has long been carried on in the neighbourhood. The East India Company had large *surungs* or factories for these textures at Khirpāi and Rādhānagar in the adjoining subdivision of Ghātal, and we find that in 1759 Mr. Watts, Resident of "Guttaul," complained that the *gomardas* at "Connakool" had detained some silk winders who were indebted to him.

Khānakul is inhabited by many families of the higher castes, specially Brāhmins and Kāyasths, a sure sign that it is an old place. The Brāhmins of Khānakul formed a distinct Samāj, noted for their learning and studies in grammar and astronomy. In Valentyn's map "Canucoel" and above it "Sjanabatti" are shown on the west bank of a large stream, which though not named, is evidently the Kānā Dwārakeswar, then the main channel.

Konnagar.—The southernmost part of the Serampore Municipality (*v.* Serampore).

Kotrang.—A town in the Serampore subdivision, situated in 22° 41' N. and 88° 21' E. Population (1901) 6,574. It lies between the Hooghly river and the East Indian Railway, with Konnagar on the north and Uttarpārā on the south. The town is small and generally unhealthy, its death-rate during the decade ending in 1902 being 42·21 per mille or more than double the birth-rate (19·77); the low-birth-rate is largely due to a considerable floating population of males, who are attracted to the town by the brick and tile making industry, for there are a number of brick-fields along the bank of the Hooghly. The Calcutta Corporation had a large brick field here, which is now sublet to private persons; a little jute rope and string are also made by hand. The town is of modern creation, and is not shown in any old maps; but the village of Kotrang is mentioned in the poem of Bipra Dās (1495 A.D.); and one part of the town, Bhadrakālī, in a Bengali poem on Satyanārāyan Pīr (18th century). Bhadrakālī is so called from an old temple of the goddess Kālī. A religious fair is held here about the middle of January in honour of a saint named Mānik Pīr.

Krishnanagar.—A large village on the left bank of the Kānā Dāmodar, in the Serampore subdivision. It is the headquarters of a thāna and contains a station on the Chāmpadāngā branch of the Howrah-Amṛā Light Railway. "Kistanagar" appears in Bennell's Atlas with a flag mark indicating a police station, and is therefore a fairly old village.

Krishnanagar.—A large village on the right bank of the Kānā Dwārakeswar in the Arāmbāgh subdivision. It lies about

two miles north of Khānākūl police station, and is often distinguished from other places of the same name by the designation Khānākūl-Krishnanagar. In the dry season it may be reached from the Old Benāres road by the Māyāpur-Jagatpur road; there is a District Board bungalow on this road at Gopālnagar, a mile south of Krishnanagar. The easiest way, however, is to go from Jānāchak by boat, which brings one to Krishnanagar in 6 or 7 hours. An out-door dispensary is maintained here by the zamindar, and there are three Sanskrit *toles*. A large temple, surrounded by a dozen smaller ones, stands on the river bank; it is dedicated to Gopināth, and was visited by the poet Bhārat Chandra Ray about 1751 A.D. In the village of Nāptipārā, close by, lived the ancestors of the late Bābu Bhudev Mukherji, the first Indian Inspector of Schools and for some time a member of the Legislative Council of Bengal.

Rādhānagar or Raghunāthpur immediately north of Krishnanagar, was the home of Rājā Rāmmohan Rai, the well-known reformer and founder of the Brāhmo Samāj. It is now the property and residence of his grandson, Rājā Piyari Mohan Rai.

Magrā.—A large village in thāna Hooghly of the Hooghly subdivision, situated in 22° 59' N. and 88° 22' E. on the right (south) bank of the Kana Nadi, which is here called the Magrā Khal. The Grand Trunk Road passes through the place, which also contains the junction station of the East Indian Railway and the Bengal Provincial Railway, the latter having two stations, Magrā and Magrāganj. The *ganj* or mart is an important one, a considerable traffic passing through it by rail, road and river. An outpost and a post office are located here; and there is a Public Works Department bungalow on the Grand Trunk Road. Cotton fabrics are manufactured by hand looms in some quantities in the neighbourhood; but the chief exports are paddy, rice, tobacco and fine sand. The latter is taken from the bed of the Kana Nadi near Magrāganj and used for building. The river is evidently an old channel of the Dāmodar, which must once have run straight across to Tribeni. The Magrā sand-beds are nearly exhausted, and sand is now dug up all along the line of the Bengal Provincial Railway at Sultāngāchi, Dwārbāsini Milki, etc., whence it is railed to Tribeni and exported by boat to Calcutta.

The manufacture of cotton cloths at Magrā dates back a long time for the "Minutes of Consultations" of Fort William mention the despatch of *gunashtas* to a large *surung* or factory at Golagore, near Magrā. In 1755, it was reported that Rs. 38,518 had been advanced to the weavers at Golagore; and in 1767 an inspecting officer visited the *surung* there and reported that

things were going on well. The early records of Hooghly show that the *aurang* was replaced before 1795 by a Commercial Residency at Golagore, the road from Nayāsarāi to Burdwan *via* Golagore being the boundary between the area it commanded and that of Haripāl. Later, it appears from a report of the Resident in 1810 that a considerable trade had sprung up in *sun* or hemp at Golagore. The Residency is mentioned in W. Hamilton's *Hindustan* (1820), and was abolished about 1835. After its abolition, though the manufacture of cotton and silk declined, there was a development of trade owing to the construction of the Grand Trunk Road, which crossed the Kānā Nadi (old Dāmodar) at Magrā *en route* to Burdwan. This improvement continued until the East Indian Railway drew off the bulk of the trade to the north-west. The trade became local, and gradually dwindled. In recent years the local traffic has been considerably developed by the Bengal Provincial Railway with its Tribeni branch giving direct access to the Hooghly river; and it will presumably be further developed when the Hooghly-Kātwa line, now under construction, is opened.

In Rennell's Atlas "Moggur: Gaut" is shown as connected with "Terbonee" or "Bansbaria" by a road that passed on to Burdwan. When the Grand Trunk Road was built, an iron suspension bridge was built over the Kunti Nullah at a cost of Rs. 36,000 contributed by the Burdwan Rājā in 1829; and in 1830 the portion between Hooghly and Magrā was metalled.

Māhānād (*Mahā*, great, and *nāth* lord) — A large village lying partly in thāna Panduā and partly in thāna Polbā of the Hooghly subdivision, situated a mile north of the station of the same name on the Bengal Provincial Railway. It contains a station of the Free Kirk Rural Mission, which has established an out-door dispensary and a High English school. The village also contains temples of Brahmamayī and Siva; on the Sivarātri day (February-March) a religious fair called *Muhānād Jātsa* is held in Siva's temple. According to the legends of Panduā, Māhānād was conquered by the Muhammadans together with Panduā (q v). There is a tank here known as the *Jibankund*, where it is said that dead Hindus were restored to life again, until it was defiled by the Musalmāns throwing cow's flesh in it. Here too the remains of a high embankment from Tribeni to Māhānād, 8 miles, can still be seen, which goes by the name of *Jamāi jāngāl* (son-in law's embankment).

Māheśh (*Māheśh*, a title of Siva). — A quarter of Serampore town lying between Bishrā and Bāllabhpur. See Serampore.

Mandalai.—A village in 'thāna Panduā of the Hooghly subdivision. It is 4 miles from the Panduā railway station, and is accessible by the Panduā-Inchūrā road. It contains an out-door dispensary, which provides medical relief to a malarious tract. Its cost is met from the income of a Trust Fund left by Dr. Bholānāth Bose, late Civil Medical Officer of Faridpur, Mandalai being his wife's ancestral home. The place is commonly known as Ilsoba-Mandalai.

Mandāran.—An old place lying in thāna Goghāt of the Arāmbāgh subdivision, 7 or 8 miles W. S.-W. of Arāmbāgh town. The name is probably derived from *Mandār*, a name, and *abani*, tract; * but another derivation is given by Mr. Beames, viz., *munda*, bad, and *aranya*, forest.† The Burdwān-Midnapore road passes west, and the Old Nāgpur road a little north of the place. It contains the ruins of two forts, the northern one called Garh Mandāran and the southern one Bhitargarh, of which the following description is quoted from an article by Lieutenant-Colonel D. G. Crawford, I.M.S., on "Places of Historical Interest in Hughli District" published in *Bengal Past and Present* (Vol. II, pages 294-97)‡. "An earthen ramp, some ten to fifteen feet high, encloses a space of about 500 yards square, roughly quadrangular with the corners rounded off. The river Amudwara (Amodar) enters this place at the northern corner of the ramp and flows across it, passing out at a gap in the eastern side, near its south end. The south-eastern corner of the quadrangle shows a distinct bulge outwards to the south-east, the reason for which is not apparent. On the right or south-west bank of the river stand the ruins of the "inner fort" or Bhitargarh. These ruins consist of a mound some 200 yards square, and I should think 30 to 40 feet high in the centre. More or less all round this mound, but specially on the northern (river) and southern faces, may be seen traces of a wall, built of laterite blocks below, brick above. The sides of the mound are overgrown with jungle, both tree and scrub; so thick, that it is difficult to get through. The top is more open, though it also is covered with trees. The whole mound, apparently consists of broken brick, more or less, but no trace of any definite building, even in ruins, is visible, except a Musalmān tomb on the highest point.

"This tomb consists of three terraces 16 paces long from north to south, 12 from east to west, and each about two feet high. They are built of old stones, and apparently have been patched

* *Etymology of Parsia*, I. c., Ind., Ant. XX, p. 420.

† J. R. A. S., 1896, p. 106.

‡ See also Proc. & S. R., April 1876, pp. 115-13.

up from time to time. On the highest terrace is the tomb itself, some six feet long and three feet high. A yard from its northern end is a small brick pillar, with a niche in it for a lamp. There were many clay horses round the tomb, mostly very small coarse clay images, but one quite artistic and much larger. The space between the northern ramp and river is high grass land. The rest of the enclosure is mostly cultivated as rice fields, except its southern end, which is a swamp. Just outside the southern ramp lies a long narrow tank, which probably was once a moat. From the southern end of the outer ramp projects a second fortification, about 300 yards long from the south to north and 500 broad, with a high mound at its south-west angle; this mound consists mostly of masses of roughly cut laterite and must have been a strong bastion.

'The situation is well chosen for defence against an enemy armed only with bows and arrows or even early firearms. Even if the outer ramp were taken, the garrison of the inner fort were sure of a water-supply from a river, which does not run dry during the hot weather, washing the northern walls of the fort. The ramp of the outer fort is now only some 10 to 15 feet high, and presents an easy slope on both inner and outer sides. Cavalry could ride over it; indeed, it would now hardly check them in a gallop. But this is after the rains of a century at least, probably much longer, have acted on it. In the days when the ruin was a fortress, it was probably much higher and steeper. This fort is the scene of the story '*Durgesi Nandini*,' by the celebrated Bengali novelist, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, who was Subdivisional Officer of Jahānabad about 20 years ago.

"A little north of the northern ramp lie the ruins of Garh Mandaran. These consist of large mounds, 15 to 20 feet high, covering a space of about half a mile square. A poor modern village covers part of this area. On one of the mounds towards the south stands a mosque, of no particular antiquity or interest."

Historically, Mandāran is a place of much interest. In the Orissa copper plates, the king of Mandār (the old name of Mandāran) is stated to have been defeated by Chodaganga and driven to the banks of the Ganges. Various traditions connect the place with Ismāil Ghāzi, a famous general of Husain Shāh, the Sultān of Bengal, from whose time it became an important frontier station of Bengal commanding the old Pādishāhi road from Burdwan to Orissa. Madāran appears as a *Sarkār* in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, its headquarters Haveli-i-Madāran being a large *mahāl* with a revenue of 1,727,077 *dams* (Rs. 43,127). In accounts of the wars between the Afghāns and the Mughals in Akbar's reign, it is

mentioned several times as being on the royal road to Orissa; its importance in those days is also clear from the fact that it was one of the very few places shown in the maps of Gastaldi, De Barros and Blaeu. With the subjugation of the Afghāns in Orissa, its importance gradually declined; and by the second half of the 17th century it disappeared from European maps. The chief traces of its status as a frontier town now consist of the remains of its forts, and the survival of a considerable number of Musalmān *dimādārs*, holding lands rent-free or at quit-rents as a reward for military and other services.

Several quaint legends attach to the place; its old remains, and also its romantic site on the Amodar, induced Babu Bankim Chandra Chatterji to select it as the scene of one of his best-known novels, the *Durgesa-nandini* or the Chieftain's Daughter. The following story about the headless rider of Mandāran is quoted from Blochmann's account* :—

"In days of old, Ismāil Ghāzī, a General (*sipahsālār*) of Husain Shah of Gaur, was sent to fight the infidels of Orissā. After gaining a signal victory, Ismāil returned from Katak to Bengal, and halted at a small place called Madāran, south-west of Burdwan. He was pleased with the surrounding country and stayed there for some time. One night, while saying his prayers in the open air, he was disturbed by a noise above his head. He looked up, and saw a long line of Devs passing eastwards to bathe in the Bhāgirati. 'You have disturbed my prayer,' exclaimed Ismāil to the Devs, 'come down and perform the service which I shall impose upon you as a punishment.' 'We cannot interrupt our flight to the river', replied the Devs, 'but on our return we will do whatever thou commandest.' After some time the Devs came back, and presented themselves before Ismāil, who commanded them to build, at the place where he was, an immense fort, after the model of the fort of Lankā (Ceylon). The Devs at first objected, because they had never been in Lankā; but, as Ismāil remained firm, they quickly despatched one of their number to Lankā, and before morning dawned the Fort of Madāran was completed.

"But the circuit of the Fort, which the Devs had built in one night, was so great that much land belonging to Hindus had been taken away for it. Now there was a Brāhman in Brāhman-gānw, half a mile north of Bhutargarh, who had some influence (*rāsāi*) with Husain Shah; and as a tank belonging to him had been taken within the new fort, he went straight to Gaur and

* Proceedings, A. S. B., April 1870, pp. 117—19.

told Hussin Shāh that Ismāil prepared for a revolt. Had he not built an immense fort near the frontier of Orissa, without telling the king? This appeared convincing, and Husain Shāh sent a messenger to Madāran, to recall Ismāil to Court: Ismāil was just superintending the digging of a tank near Goghāt, about four miles east of Madāran, when the order (*farmān*) came. Hence the tank is even now-a-days called *Farmandighi*, the Tank of the Order.

"Ismāil obeyed the call of his king; but no sooner had he arrived in Gaur, than he was executed by Husain Shāh. When the head had been severed from the body, strange to behold, the headless trunk mounted a horse that stood near, and rode off in the direction of Madāran, whilst the head flew up and followed the rider, hovering high in the air perpendicularly above the body. At night the headless rider arrived before the gate of Bhitargarh, where two of his servants stood on guard. He told them not to be afraid, and explained what had happened to him in Gaur, and that he had been innocently killed by the king. He then asked them to give him some *pan*. But this the men would not do, saying that his head was high above, and he would not be able to eat. 'Then it is not Allah's will,' exclaimed Ismāil, 'that my head should join the body'—for he would have been restored to life, if they had given him something to eat—'go therefore, my head, go back to Gaur, to be buried there.' Thereupon the head returned to Gaur the same road it had come, and the grave where it was buried there may be seen to this day.

"When the head had left, Ismāil asked the guards to open the gates. He entered the town and coming to a certain spot within the Fort, he ordered the earth to open herself, when suddenly before the eyes of all, horse and rider disappeared in the yawning abyss. The earth then closed again. These wonderful events were soon told all over the neighbourhood, and crowds of visitors came to see the hallowed spot where the martyr had disappeared. About the same time, the Rāja of Burdwan was at warfare with the Rājā of Bardah, and the latter had made a vow that he would build a *Dargāh* or *Astānah* (tomb) for Hazrat Ismāil, should he be successful against the Burdwan Rāja. Fortune favouring him, he kept his vow and built the tomb, which is still within Bhitargarh at Madāran."

About two miles south-east of Madāran is a village named Dinanāth. Two large gateways are visible here leading to an enclosure extending over 8 or 10 *bighas*. According to tradition, the enclosure was a military basar on the old Orissa road. Both

the gateways have Persian inscriptions. That on the southern gateway speaks of the place being called *Mubārak Mansal* by order of Nawāb Asad Jang (Nawab Shujā-ud-dīn of the historians) when he encamped here on his way from Orissa to Bengal in 1136H. (1723-24 A.D.);* while that on the northern gateway records the erection of a *sarai* by Mutamin-ul-Mulk, (*i. e.*, Shujā-ud-dīn) in 1143 H. (1730-31 A.D.).* It was here that Shujā-ud-dīn was informed of his appointment as Nawāb of Bengal, and the gateways were apparently erected in commemoration of the good news.

Māyāpur.—A village in thāna Arāmbāgh of the Arāmbāgh subdivision. It is situated on the Old Benares road, about five miles east of Arambagh town, and a mile north of the Kānā Dwarakeswar stream. The road to Jagatpur *via* Khānākul starts from this place, at which a mud-walled thatched hut does duty as a District Board bungalow. It is an old village, mentioned in the *Chandi* of Kavikankar (*circa* 1600 A.D.) as the headquarters of a *amildār* or village-owner, named Mahmūd Sharif. In the early British days a considerable quantity of silk cloth was manufactured here; but it is now a decadent village, having suffered greatly from the epidemics of Burdwan fever.

Mohsin Fund.—An endowment fund created by Haji Muhammad Mohsin, who inherited the large property of his step-sister, the widow of Salāh-ud-dīn, *Faujdar* of Hooghly. In 1806 he executed a *tauhāt-nāma*, or deed of appropriation of his property, in which it was stated that in the testator's family, from generation to generation, certain charges had been incurred and usages observed in connection with the celebration of religious rites and festivals, and that, as he had no children by whom the performance of these pious duties could be performed, he desired to make provision for their continued discharge. He, therefore, made over specified property to two managers, with instructions that they should divide the net income into nine equal shares, two of which they should keep for their own use, three they should devote to the expenses of celebrating religious festivals and executing repairs in the Hooghly Imāmbāra and burial-ground, while the remaining four shares should be spent in paying salaries and pensions, according to a list attached. The bequest included the following properties:—the zamindārī of *pargana* Kismat Saiyadpur and Sobnāli in Khulnā and Jessore, the Imāmbāra building, the Imāmbāra bazar and *hāt*, and the furniture of the Imāmbāra at Hooghly.

It appears from the proceedings of the Vice-President in Council, Persian Department, dated the 8thth December 1826, and from the correspondence generally, that these salaries and pensions were payable to the officers and servants of the Imāmbāra, so that the whole endowment, as far as its purpose was specified, was for the support of that religious institution, of the ceremonies performed in it, and of the persons employed in it. The founder added the provision that "the managers after me will exercise their discretion and authority either to continue or discontinue them (the allowances and pensions) as they may think proper, and I have made over the management generally to them." No specific direction, however, was given as to what use should be made of any savings which might accrue from the discontinuance of salaries or pensions under the power given by this last clause, the matter being thus left to the discretion of the managers. A year before the execution of this deed, a suit had been instituted against Hāji Muhammad Mohsin by Mirzā Bundah Ullā, claiming, under a pretended will, the lands which the former subsequently constituted an endowment. This suit was prosecuted from court to court up to the Privy Council, and lasted some 30 years, during the whole of which period it continued to be uncertain whether the endowment was valid or not.

Hāji Muhammad Mohsin died in 1812, and the managers whom he had appointed seem immediately to have entered upon a course of mismanagement and embezzlement. According to the finding of the Court of Sadar Diwāni Adālat, the proper objects of the endowment were neglected, the Government revenue fell into arrears, while the income was spent on quarrels between the managers, bribes to the police and *amins*, and gifts to the managers' relatives. Moreover, in order to increase their own profits at the expense of the trust, they forged a perpetual lease in their own favour and that of their relatives, purporting to have been executed by Hāji Muhammad Mohsin before the deed of foundation. The Board of Revenue interfered for the better government of the endowment under Regulation XIX of 1810, at first associating a Superintendent with the managers, then laying down rules for their control, and finally, in 1817, as these milder measures had only made matters worse, dismissing the managers altogether. As the relatives of the latter were implicated with them in the frauds committed, a Government servant was appointed to administer the endowment under the orders of the Board and Local Agents. From this time the institution has been practically controlled by Government.

The Board of Revenue in 1817 founded a *madrasa* at an annual cost of Rs. 6,000 payable out of the funds of the endowment. But the leading feature in the first 20 years of Government management, was the growth of a considerable fund vested in Government securities. In 1821 the property was settled in *patni* tenures, that is to say, tenures subject to a quit-rent fixed in perpetuity, and about six lakhs of rupees were received on this account. As, however, the suit questioning the validity of the title was then pending in the Privy Council, it was made a condition that if that case were lost, and the new owner refused to confirm the *patnis*, the purchase-money should be returned with interest. To meet this possible charge, the proceeds of the *patni* sale were invested in Government securities, and, the interest being added as it accrued to the original principal, a capital sum of about ten lakhs of rupees was accumulated.

In 1835, shortly after the law suits terminated, it was decided by the Government of India that three ninths of the income from the zamindari should be assigned permanently for the current expenses of the Imāmbara, &c. Of the two-ninths of the income assigned to the *mutawāllis*, one-ninth was assigned to the agent or *mutawāll* appointed by Government, and the remaining one-ninth was to be available for general purposes of a beneficent nature. The four-ninths share of the zamindari income appropriated by Hāji Muhammad Mohsin to pensions and establishments was to remain liable to those charges, but when they lapsed, the income was to be added to the surplus fund appropriable to general purposes. There thus remained at the disposal of Government for general purposes of a beneficent nature (1) one-ninth of the annual income from the zamindari; (2) the lapsed pensions, &c.; and (3) the entire amount accruing from the interest of the accumulated fund invested in Government promissory notes. It was decided that, after setting apart from this last-mentioned fund such an amount as might be necessary to provide appropriate buildings, including the charge of rebuilding or repairing the Imāmbara and other religious edifices, if it should be found necessary to renew them, the remainder should be considered as a Trust Fund, the interest of which, with other items specified, might be appropriated to the purpose of education by the formation of a collegiate institution imparting instruction of all kinds in the higher departments of education."

After the passing of Act XX of 1863 a committee was appointed, under section 7 of that enactment, for the supervision of the endowment assigned for religious uses. This Committee

controls the expenditure of a contribution equal to three-ninths of the income directly derived from the original estate in the form of rents and an allowance of Rs. 750 a month in respect of the charge for establishment to be borne by the four-ninths share. The manager, who now deals only with the religious assignment, having no concern with the property generally, receives one-ninth. The remainder of the estate, including the whole of the interest on the accumulation, is held to be at the disposal of Government as successor to the managers appointed by the founder.

This fund was originally applied to the foundation and support of the Hooghly College, which was open to members of all religious communities. To this arrangement the objection was raised that an institution almost exclusively frequented by Hindus was not the most suitable recipient of the income of a distinctively Muhammadan endowment. Accordingly the Government of Bengal, by a resolution dated 29th July 1873, decided that the fund should be used exclusively for the promotion of education among Muhammadans, the Hooghly College being maintained from other sources. It has since then been devoted with great discretion, and with the best results, to assisting the progress of Muhammadan education throughout Bengal by various means, such as the payment of a part of the fees of Muhammadan students at the University and at zilla schools, the appointment of Persian teachers at the latter, the foundation of scholarships and hostels, etc.

According to the Report of the Muhammadan Educational Endowments Committee (1888), from which the above account has been compiled, "the history of the Mohsin Fund may be quoted with much effect as an instance of the benefit which may accrue from bold and uncompromising action in dealing with endowments. The original object of the foundation, the Imāmbāra at Hooghly, has been rebuilt, and is a handsome edifice, where the traditional ceremonies are maintained with a degree of splendour which more than fulfils the main desire of the founder that the devotional practices of his family should not perish with his race. And the surplus income, small as it is compared with the work to be done among Muhammadans in Bengal generally, is so applied as to be of the greatest use, aiding thousands in obtaining an education which they might otherwise be unable to secure. It must, however, be owned that it would be impossible to treat all endowments with the freedom exercised in the case of Mohsin's Imāmbāra, as to which Government has acted with an eye only to utility, applying the surplus of a religious and local foundation at first on the

appointed spot to secular purposes without distinction of creed, and now over all Bengal without reference to any limit of place. This wide discretion has never been claimed for the ruling power as such, and was used in this case by Government in the assumed capacity of *mutawāllī* or manager of the trust."

Muhammad Aminpur.—A large estate in the Serampore subdivision consisting of about 350 *mauzas*. Its area is 61,807 acres and its rent-roll is Rs. 1,87,743, the land revenue being Rs. 80,112. The estate is so called after Muhammad Aminpur, a small village in the Kālnā subdivision of Burdwān. Tradition relates that this village was founded by one Muhammad Amin, an *amīn* under Shah Shujā. After his death, the village, having fallen into arrears of revenue, was acquired by the ancestor of the Sheorāphuli and Bānsberīā zamīndārs, who gave the name Muhammad Aminpur to the estate which he owned. This estate had been formed before 1728, the year of the land revenue settlement of Nawāb Shuja-ud-dīn, and, on partition, passed into the hands of the Sheorāphuli Rāj. During the time of Rājā Purna Chandra, the estate was sold and purchased by the Rājā of Dighāpatīā and by one Lakshmi Prasād, whose share was subsequently bought by Mahārājā Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore. His son and heir, Mahārājā Sir Prodyot Kumār Tagore, is now in possession of the greater part of the estate, and the remainder is held by the Rājā of Dighāpatīā. The history of this estate under the Mughal rule and during the early administration of the British will be found in the chapter dealing with Land Revenue Administration.

Nālikul—A village in thāna Haripāl of the Serampore subdivision. There is a station here on the Tārakeswar branch of the East Indian Railway, and the village is also connected with the Haripāl thāna by a short road, 1 miles long. Formerly it was a place of some importance, being shown in Rennell's Atlas, plate VII, as Nallyoure with the flag mark of a police station and as the junction of several roads.

Nayāsārai (*Nayā*, new and *sarāi*, inn).—A village in thāna Balāgarh of the Hooghly subdivision. It is situated at the outfall of the Magrā Khāl into the Hooghly river, and is about 2 miles north of Tribeni on the Guptipārā road, which is here carried over the Magrā Khāl by a suspension bridge. It was a place of considerable importance in old days, as the Magrā Khāl formed the main channel of the Dāmodar, and the line of traffic to Burdwān lay through Nayāsārai. The old road to Nadiā and Murshidābad also passed through it: and mention is made of Nawāb Sirāj-ud-daula halting here on the 19th January 1757 when he was marching up to recover Hooghly, and of Clive's

arrival on the 13th June *en route* to Plassey.* Stavorinus visited the "channel of Niasserai" on 27th January 1770 and described the country as "pleasant plains of arable and pasture land, intermixed with groves of cocoanut, *surt*, mango and other trees. The sugarcane was likewise cultivated in many places and flourished luxuriantly.†"

Panduā.—A large village in the Hooghly subdivision, situated in 25° 5' N. and 88° 17' E. It is 14 miles north-west of Hooghly town (Kco'ā) by the Grand Trunk Road, which passes through it, and can be easily reached from Hooghly in an hour by the East Indian Railway, which has a station here; it is further connected with Kalnā in Burdwan district by a *pucki* road *via* Inchurā. The village is the headquarters of a police thana and of an Union Committee; and it contains a post office, a sub-registry office, and a Public Works Department bungalow about a mile off from the railway station. It is the chief centre of the Sunnī Musalmāns in the district, and is inhabited by many Ashraf or respectable families, including a number of *āmadars*, i. e., holders of land granted in reward for service. In the early British period, when *Kāzis* used to be appointed for assisting in the administration of justice, a considerable number were recruited from Panduā; the post of *Kāzi-ul-Kazzat* or Chief Kazi was hereditary for some time in a Panduā family. Latterly some of them have been appointed Deputy Magistrates, Sub-Registrars, etc. These Ashraf families are said to be descended from Musalmān officers and soldiers who settled here in the pre-Mughal days. A large fair is held on the 1st Magh (middle of January) and another on the 1st Baisakh (middle of April). The former is the more important, and is attended by about 10,000 people, mostly Musalmāns. The village is situated on a dead stream, the Kāsai, and was formerly more populous, but it was decimated by Burdwan fever, which first appeared here in July 1862. Within a decade the place was ruined, 5,222 persons dying out of a total population of 6,961.

From an antiquarian point of view, Panduā is one of the most interesting places in the district. The chief remains of antiquity are a tower, two mosques, a tomb, and two tanks. The most noticeable of these remains is the tower, which stands about a hundred yards east of the fourth furlong of the 42nd mile of the Grand Trunk Road. It is round and has five storeys, each lessening in diameter from 60 feet at the base to 15 feet at the top.

* *Bengal in 1756-57*, Hill, II, 110, 175; III, 65.*

† *Travels*, I, p. 129.

The outer face is ornamented with convex fluting, and the inside walls are enamelled. In the centre of the building is a circular staircase leading to the top, and at the base of each storey is a doorway leading to a narrow terrace running all round the building. The total height of the tower, including the pinnacle, used to be 125 feet, but the topmost portion fell down in the earthquake of 1885. In 1907 the tower was repaired at the cost of Government, the fifth storey (about 20 feet high) with a dome and pinnacle being rebuilt. The tower is now 127 feet high and has been replastered and whitewashed. The loopholes in the outer wall having been cleared, and the inside staircase rebuilt, the ascent to the top is easy.

The object with which the tower was built is not clear. Popularly, it is believed to be a *minazzin* tower, from the top of which the faithful were called to prayer; and according to Mussalmān traditions it was erected by Shah Sufi-ud-din after he gained a victory over the local Hindu chief. No inscription, however, has been found in the tower itself. Tall towers of a similar kind are found in various parts of India, e.g., the Firoza Minār in Gaur, which is also five-storeyed and has a base diameter of about 20 feet and a height of about 90 feet, and the ruined tower at Mināsarai, on the west bank of the Mahānandā opposite old Malda, which has nearly the same base-diameter and the same height.* The Kutb Minār of Delhi, with a basement diameter of $47\frac{1}{2}$ feet and a height (excluding the capital) of 238 feet, is still better known.† In these towers the ratio between the diameter and the height is about 1 to $4\frac{1}{2}$; while in the Paudā tower the height is reduced to less than half, making the ratio about 1 to $2\frac{1}{10}$. In spite of this difference, it may be conjectured that they are of the same character. According to some, they are imitations of Hindu *Jaya-stambhas* or victory-pillars, a theory suggested by the local traditions.

About 175 feet west of the tower stands a ruined mosque, which was in much better preservation 30 years ago. It is a long structure, rather low in height inside. The roof, now more or less dismantled, had numerous low domes, of which 63 were counted by Blochmann. Its roof rested on high pointed arches, supported by two rows of 21 pillars, each 6 feet high. The pillars are of basalt, with several horizontal bands, in various patterns; about half of them have shafts ornamented in Hindu fashion (not Buddhistic,* as Blochmann conjectured) with

* *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol. XV, pt. 59, 79.

† A. S. R. Vol. I, p. 205.

garlands and pendant bells. The mosque walls and arches are made of small light-red bricks. The inner western wall is diversified with several low niches. The niches have quatrefoil arches and are finely ornamented on the sides with trellised net-work, with diamond patterns below the arches and with a rosette on each side above them. In the north-west corner of the mosque is a high platform of solid masonry with a small room on top, which is said to have served Shāh Sufi as a *Chillāh-khānah*, i.e., a room used by hermits for a 40 days' 'retreat'. A few unfinished oblong pillars of black basalt lie about. No inscription has been found in the mosque. From its low height, thin bricks, numerous domes, and Hindu ornamentation, the mosque appears architecturally to belong to the early Pathan period.* The basalt slates were probably brought from the Rajmahal Hills by water. The ruins have now been cleared by Government, but no restoration has been attempted.

South of the tower, on the opposite side of the Grand Trunk Road, is the *astānah* or tomb of Shāh Sufi-ud-dīn, a small white-washed structure, which is kept in repair by subscriptions raised by the Muhammadans. It has no inscription. Several fairs are held near the *astānah*, to which many people come and present offerings in the hope that their desires will be fulfilled.

West of this tomb is another ruined mosque. Its walls are ornamented with patterns, partly Hindu and partly Muhammadan. On the outside are three basalt tablets having Arabic inscriptions in large Tughra characters; they consist of verses from the Korān with blessings on the Prophet. Inside, on the central tablet high above the ground, is another Arabic inscription. It records the erection of the mosque by Ulugh Majlis-i-Asam in the reign of Yusuf Shah, dated 882H. (1477 A.D.).* The characters of this inscription, though in Tughra, differ from the earlier inscriptions of Tribeni in having many round strokes, which bring them nearer to the Nastalik characters of Akbar's time. There is a short inscription in this mosque stating, curiously enough, that it was repaired by a Hindu named Lāl Kunwar Nath in 1177H. (1763 A.D.). This shows that the *dargāh* was venerated not only by Musalmāns, but also by Hindus.

South of the tomb is a fine tank called *Rausah pokhar*. Another large and deep tank in the north of Pandua is dedicated to the saint, and is called *Pir pokhar*. A large alligator lives in it, which, when called by the *fakir* in charge with the words 'Kafer Khān Miyan' or simply 'Miyan', comes to the bank for

* M. M. Chakravarti, *Pre-Mughal Mosques of Bengal*, J. A. S. B., 1910, pp. 24, 25.

food. Hindus as well as Musalmāns sacrifice fowls to it in fulfilment of vows. There is also a modern mosque called the Kutb Sahib mosque. It has a Persian inscription that records its construction by Fath Khān, an Afghān, in the 9th year of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh's reign, i.e., 1140 H. (1727-28 A.D.).

The town is said to have been fortified by a wall and a trench, but little of them now remains except a *bāndh* to the north. Various legends are told about the Musalmān occupation of the place. The version given by Blochmann is quoted below with his remarks: "Six hundred years ago, when the Panduah Rājah reigned over the district, Shāh Safiuddīn lived at Panduah. The Rājah was a powerful man, and resided at Mahānāth, a village not far from Panduah. Shāh Safi was a man of illustrious descent. His father, Barkhurdar, was a noble of the Court of Delhi, and had married a sister of the Emperor Firūz Shāh. Once a feast was given in Panduah to celebrate the circumcision of a boy, and a cow had been killed on the occasion. This sacrilege was reported to the Panduah Rājah, who had the child killed. Safi then went to Delhi, complained to his uncle, the Emperor, and asked him to give him a sufficient number of troops to punish the Rājah. His request was granted; but as the expedition was a religious war, Safi before setting out for Bengal, went to Pānīpat-Karnāl to ask the blessing of Bū Ali Qalandar, a renowned saint. The blessing was not withheld, and the saint assured Safi that he had received the glad tidings of victory from Heaven.

"Safi now moved to Panduah. In his army there were also two other men of renown, Zafar Khān-i-Ghāzi, whose shrine is at Tribenī, north of Hūgli, and Bahram Saqqā, who had imposed upon himself the task of serving as Bhishti (*saqqā*) in a war against infidels. His shrine is at Burdwan. But it was a difficult matter to crush the power of the Rājah; for near his residence at Mahānāth he had a tank, the waters of which possessed miraculous powers; and whenever a Hindu had been killed, the Panduah Rājah threw the dead body into the tank, and life and health were immediately restored. Safi soon saw that his efforts would be fruitless, unless the restorative power of the tank was first broken. This was at last accomplished by some *faqirs* who had attached themselves to his expedition. They killed a cow, and managed to throw the liver into the tank, when all at once the Devis, upon whose presence the virtue of the water depended, went away. The Rājah was now easily defeated, and his power completely broken. The old temple at Panduah was also destroyed, and the present mosque was built with its materials.

The large tower was used as a *Manārah* for the call to prayer, and every Hindu was driven out of the town.

"Safi soon after continued his wars with the infidels, and was at last killed in a fight. His children buried him at Panduah, and erected the vault, which, together with his mosque, still exists. His descendants increased so rapidly, that Panduah soon became a large place. The fame also of the nobility of its inhabitants, who all trace their descent to the sister of the Emperor Firūz Shāh, spread over the whole of Bengal.

"This is the legend. I have not met with Safiuddin's name in any Indian history, or in the numerous biographies of Muhammadan saints. The story, however, contains one historical personage, the saint Bū Ali Qalandar of Panipat-Karnāl, to whom, as related above, Safi applied for blessing. This apparently most unimportant item furnishes the clue to the whole legend. His full name is Shaikh Sharafuddin Bū Ali Qalandar. He was a follower of the first Indian saint, Muḥ-ud-dīn-i Chishtī, whose tomb is at Ajmir, and wrote several religious works, from among which a small *Masnawī*, without title, has been printed. Bū Ali Qalandar lived at Panipat, and died there, at an advanced age, on the 13th Ramazan 724, or in the middle of September, 1324 A. D. His shrine still exists in Panipat. The date of the death of the saint enables us to ascertain which of the three Emperors of Dīhlī that bore the name of Firūz Shāh, corresponds to the Firūz Shāh of the Panduah legend. Firūz Shāh I died in A. D. 1236; Firūz Shāh II in 1296, and Firūz Shāh III reigned from 1351 to 1388; and thus we see that the Panduah legend means Firūz Shāh II, or, according to his full name, Jalaluddin i-Khiljī Firūz Shāh, whose contemporary was Bū Ali Qalandar.

"We may thus safely refer the foundation of the Muhammadan settlement at Panduah to the very end of the 13th century, or not quite 100 years after the conquest of Nadīā and the overthrow of the Lakhmanīyah rulers of Bengal by Bakhtyār i-Khiljī, a date with which not only the style of architecture of the Pathān mosque of Panduah, but also the inscriptions on Zafar's tomb in Tribeni (A. H. 713 or A. D. 1313) fully agree.*"

In the 13th century, therefore, Panduā was a place of some importance, and, as the remains shōw, its importance increased during the next two centuries. The question naturally arises how Panduā, an inland town, far from any river, and at some distance from Tribeni or Sātgaon, could have attained so

* Proc. A. S. B. 1870, pp. 123-25.

much importance. The explanation probably lies in the hydrography of the tract, which has largely changed in the last few centuries. The main stream of the Dāmodar flowed for some time in the long tortuous channel now called *Kāndā* or the dead; but it seems clear that at an earlier date it had a straighter course. The line of this straight course is indicated by the depressions in this thāna, including the Kasī below Panduā. We may infer that Panduā was originally connected with the Hooghly by the Dāmodar, which debouched somewhere near Nayāsārāi and consequently it had good water communication. Later on, the Pādishāhi road to Sātgaon appears to have passed through Panduā, thus facilitating access by land, so that in the 15th and 16th centuries Panduā was able to maintain its position, though the Dāmodar shifted its course.

Panduā was noted in the 18th century for its paper, which was prized for its thinness and durability. In the 19th century the Magistrate of Hooghly was frequently asked by other Magistrates for supplies of the Panduā paper; while the Hooghly Magistrate asked the Customs Collector of Hooghly for free passes to import the paper for his own use. In 1838, he reported that this paper was not only the best but also the cheapest. The trade has now died out owing to the introduction of machine-made paper manufactured in Bengal or imported from Europe. In the early British rule Panduā was notorious for its dacoities; and it took a long time, and required the employment of a special officer, to stamp them out from the locality.

Phurphurā.—A village in thāna Chanditala of the Serampore subdivision. It is situated not far from the left bank of the Saraswati river, above 6 miles west of Serampore town. A considerable centre of Musalmans, it is inhabited by many respectable *damādārs* or rent-free tenure-holders. They are known as Ashraf, and are said to be descendants of Muhammadan officers and soldiers, who receiving free grants of lands settled here in the pre-Mughal days. According to tradition, a Bāgdi king ruled in Phurphurā and was defeated in a battle with Hazrat Shāh Kabīr Halibī, and Hazrat Karam-ud-dīn, both of whom were killed.

In the neighbourhood of this place, at Molnah (or Mullā) Simlā, are an old low mosque and the tomb of Hazrat Muhammad Kabīr Sāhib, generally called Shāh Anwar Kuli of Aleppo. Nothing is known about this saint. Two stones near the tomb are pointed out as those on which the saint used to kneel at the time of shaving; and it is said that the marks made by his knees are still visible. The saint is credited with having been fond of looking-glasses; hence pilgrims often place looking-glasses on the

tomb as offerings. After buying them, the pilgrims must not look in them on their way to the tomb, or misfortunes will happen, as was the case with one man who, it is said, fell down dead, because he looked at his face in the glass he had bought for the saint. This curious custom seems to indicate some connection with the birth-place of Shāh Anwar, as Aleppo was formerly famous for its glassware. The tomb is venerated both by Hindus and Muhammadans.

An inscription on black basalt in the Tughra character is fixed over the entrance to the *Dargāh*. It records the erection of a mosque by the great Khān Ulugh Mukhlis Khān in the year 777H. (1375 A. D.),* and is therefore assumed to belong to the mosque near by, which is without any inscription. It is said that the mosque was built, after Shāh Anwar's death, by an ambassador, who also endowed it with lands; but, curiously enough, the inscription makes no mention of the saint Shāh Anwar. Judging from the architectural details, the mosque appears to belong to a group of mosques which were built only within a limited period, viz., 865 to 925 H. (1460-1519 A. D.). According to tradition, the mosque was built in 1001 H. by a merchant. Caught in a storm on the Saraswati river, his boat was about to sink, and he was saved miraculously on praying to the saint Anwar. In gratitude, he had this mosque built close to the saint's tomb.†

Polbā.—A village in the Hooghly subdivision, 8 miles north-west of Hooghly town. It contains a police station, the headquarters of the thāna being transferred to it from Bānsberia in 1878. It is touched by a fair-weather road from Hooghly town, which has bridges over the Saraswati on the third mile and the Kutni on the fourth mile.

Pursurā.—A village on the right bank of the Dāmodar, situated on the 34th mile of the Old Benares road. It was a place of some importance in old days, being shown in Rennell's Atlas plate VII. (1779), as Poorsara, but is now a small straggling village accessible only after the rains. It contains a police outpost and a District Board bungalow. Since the abandonment of the embankments on the right bank of the Dāmodar, about half a century ago, the village lands have become more or less exposed to the annual floods of the river, and the road is breached more or less almost every year. A District Board ferry plies between Chāmpādāngā and Pursurā in the rains, and this ferry can be traced as far back as 1828.

* Blochmann, J. A. S. B., 1870, pp. 291-92.

† M. M. Chakravarti, *Pre-Mughal Mosques*, J.A.S.B., 1910, pp. 27, 33, figs. 3 and 4.

Rājbalhāt—A considerable village on the left bank of the Dāmodar in thāna Krishnanagar of the Serampore subdivision. In the early British period it was a place of importance, being selected in 1786 for the seat of a Commercial Residency. The Residency was transferred to Haripal about 1790. "Rajbaulhaut" appears in Rennell's Atlas as a police station and the junction of several roads. After the diversion of trade to the east of the district, the place lost its importance; and it also suffered during the epidemics of Burdwan fever in the seventies. A weekly *hāt* is still held here, at which there is a fair trade in rice, etc.

Sanchitārā.—An estate in the Serampore subdivision with an area of 23,724 acres and a rent-roll of Rs. 59,074, the land revenue demand being Rs. 47,534. The estate originally belonged to the zamindars mentioned in the article on Sarsā, but Rāmdhan Banerji of Telinipārā mortgaged it to one Biswambhar Sil, after which Kshetra Nāth Sil sold it for Rs. 1,27,000 to Bābu Bejoy Krishna Mukherji. The present proprietors are his grandsons, Bābu Rās Bihāri Mukherji and Bābu Siva Nārāyan Mukherji. It is called after a village of the same name in the Pauduā thāna.

Sarsā.—A large estate in the Serampore subdivision with an area of 25,170 acres, the land revenue demand being Rs. 47,633 and the rent-roll Rs. 50,308. This estate, Sanchitārā and Gangādharpur, originally formed one estate called Gangādharpur, which was purchased by Bābu Baddi Nāth Banerji of Telinipārā from the Burdwan Raj. In 1850, there was a partition among the descendants of Baddi Nāth, by which the property was split up into the three estates of Sarsā, Sanchitārā, and Gangādharpur. The present proprietors are Bābus Satya Bhupāl Banerji and Satya Kripal Banerji.

The founder of the family was Bābu Rati Kānta Banerji, who was a *mukhtār* in the Nawāb's Court at Murshidābād in 1150 B.S., and settled at Mānkundu. Having helped the then Rājā of Sheorāphuli in paying his revenue, he received some property at Telinipārā as a gift from him; and this formed the nucleus of an estate which was further increased by his grandson, Bābu Baddi Nāth Banerji, who served in the Commissariat and there made a fortune. The estate is so called after Sarsā, a small village in the Pauduā thāna.

Sātgaon.—A small village on the left bank of the Saraswati in thāna Hooghly of the Hooghly subdivision, about 4 miles north of the town. The Grand Trunk Road passes through the village, the 31st mile stone lying between it and the river; another road connects it with Hooghly town *via* Kamidāngā, the

site of Bandel station, and just south of the place is the Tribighā station of the East Indian Railway. At the time of Blochmann's visit in 1870, there were only 11 huts here, but the unevenness of the ground between them and the Saraswati pointed to its having been the site of an extensive settlement. At one place not far from the road the capital of a large pillar was visible, which the people called *Pādishāhi fīlpāi*. At present a few huts may be seen here and there among jungle-covered mounds. On the east of the Grand Trunk Road, a considerable area is occupied by some high ground strewn with broken bricks, which is locally called the *Kila* or fort; and further east are several tanks, one of which, known as Jahāngir's tank, is fairly large in size. A pathway along the river bank leads north-east to Tribenī at the mouth of the river; 2½ miles off. Sātgaon is the Musalmān form of the Sanskrit word Saptagrām, derived from *sapta*, seven, and *grām*, villages.

The only remains of this famous capital that are now extant are a mosque and a few tombs near it. The portions of the mosque still left are the front or east wall and the back or west wall: even these portions are not intact, and the growth of young *pipal* trees in the rains threatens further destruction. The entrance in the front wall is arched (semi-circular) in the latest Pathān style; inside, there is a crescent over the entrance. The back wall has three *mihrabs* or niches, of which two are large and the third one (at the north end) small. The walls are built of small bricks and are ornamented inside and outside with arabesque work. Over the entrance is a basalt slab, 4 feet by 3 feet, with an Arabic inscription stating that Jāma Masjid was built in the reign of Abul Muzaffar Nusrat Shāh by Sayyid Jamāl Dīn Husain, son of Sayyid Fakhruddīn of Amul in Ramazān 936 H. (May 1529 A.D.): Amul is a town on the Caspian Sea. According to local tradition, Fakhr-ud-din is said to have come to Bengal with Shāh Sāfi of Panduā and Zafar Khān of Tribenī, a story *prima facie* inconsistent with the inscribed date of the mosque. In 1908 the Public Works Department repaired the mosque, patching up the front wall, removing the fallen rubbish, and clearing the surrounding jungle. The building is, however, too ruinous to render restoration feasible.

Near the south-east angle of the mosque is an enclosure with three tombs, where Sayyid Fakhr-ud-dīn, his wife and his eunuch are said to be buried. The largest tomb is ornamented with arabesque work, and has an Arabic inscription (now illegible) at the north end. This tomb is in good preservation. The other two tombs, which lie east of the first, are smaller and not in such a

good state of preservation as Fakhr-ud-din's. Besides the tombs, there are three inscribed slabs of basalt in the enclosure. One speaks of the erection of the adjoining mosque by Fakhr-ud-din; it is partly in Arabic and partly in Persian, and was evidently taken from that mosque. Another (in Arabic) was fixed into the northern wall of the tomb enclosure, and is now kept near the tombs owing to the crumbling of the wall. It records the building of a mosque by Tarbiyat Khān in the reign of Mahmūd Shāh in 861 H. (1457 A.D.). A third, also in Arabic, records the building of another mosque by Ulugh-Majlis Nur, Commander and Vizier during the reign of Fath Shah, and is dated 892 H. (1487 A.D.). Presumably, the two mosques referred to in the last two inscriptions were in Sātgaon, and when they fell, the inscriptions were removed by some pious person to this *dargah*.*

Great antiquity is commonly ascribed to Sātgaon, but this seems hardly justified by the known facts. The place has not been traced in any pre-Musalmān Sanskrit works or inscriptions; and it is not mentioned in any of the oldest Musliman works or inscriptions of Bengal. The earliest mention of it, so far as is known, is found on a silver coin of the Emperor Muhammad bin Tughlak, dated 729H. (1329 A.D.). Before his time, the seat of the Government of South West Bengal was at Tribeni, where several inscriptions have been discovered dating from 1298 A.D. The reasons for the transfer of the headquarters to Sātgaon are not known, but possibly Tribeni was found too Hinduistic for a Musalmān capital; and Muhammad Tughlak was fond of changes. From this time onwards Sātgaon flourished, becoming the port of West Bengal and containing a mint and custom house; there are numerous coins in existence with the mint-name Sātgaon, a sign that its trade was brisk. On the decay of Sonārgaon in East Bengal, its sea-borne trade was developed, attaining its zenith in the first half of the 16th century; when the Portuguese began to visit West Bengal (from 1535 onwards), they found Sātgaon a great and populous city stored with merchandise. The trading classes had settled there in large numbers, some of them being numerous enough to form distinct endogamous sections with the name *Saptagrāmiya*, e.g., among the Kāusāris (brass-dealers) and Subarnabaniks (goldsmiths). By the time of Bipra Dās (1495 A.D.) Saptagrām had become so celebrated, that it was described in his poem as the home of seven saints; an account of the place and its trade

* Blochmann, J. A. S. B., April 1870, pp. 290-91, 292-94, 297-98; *Oxford, Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. III, pp. 19-21.

is also given in the poem *Chandi* of Mukundarām Kavikāṇṇa (circa 1600). From descriptions of Saptagrām given in the *Chandi* of Mādhavāchārya (1579 A.D.) and the *Shashthi-mangal* of Krishnarām (1687 A.D.), the town appears to have extended as far east as the bank of the Ganges, and probably included Tribeni. Its importance in those days is also clear from the fact that it appears in all the old maps, such as those of Gastaldi (1561), De Barros (circa 1570) and Blaeu (1640). Ramusio, moreover, referred to "Asedegam" as "a good port, with a wide entrance where there is a good and wealthy city containing many merchants and about 10,000 hearths."

The decline of the city began with changes in the river courses. The Dāmodar began to shift westwards; the river Suraswati also began to silt up; and the upper reaches of the Bhāgirathi became difficult of navigation by the larger ships that began to visit Bengal. Hence, we find De Barros writing in the *Da Asia* that 'Satgaon is a great and noble city, though less frequented than Chittagong on account of the port not being so convenient for the entrance and departure of ships.' Cesare dei Federici also remarked (1575 A. D.) that Sātgaon was "a reasonable fair city for a city of the Moors, abounding with all things," — a statement repeated by Ralph Fitch in 1587 — and that there "the merchants gather themselves together with their trade;" but he added that the larger ships had to stop at Buttor (Bator in Howrah city), and that only small ships could go up to Sātgaon for loading, as "upwardes the river is very shallowe, and little water." Even in his time, however, the sea-borne trade was still large, for he found that every year 30 to 35 ships, both large and small, were loaded in this port "with rice, cloth of Bombast of diverse sortes, Lacca, great abundance of sugar, mirabolans dried and preserved, long pepper, oyle of zerceline, and many other sorts of marchandise."*

The importance of Sātgaon as the port and headquarters of Western Bengal was further recognized by extending its name to the *Sarkār*. In the *Ain-i-Akbari* this *Sarkār* consisted of 53 *mahāls* with a revenue of 16,724,724 *dāms* (Rs. 4,18,118). *Mahāl* Sātgaon itself comprised the city (Arsha), and a portion of its suburbs lying on the west bank of the river (Tāwālī). The greater part of the suburbs, which had been cut off from the remainder by the river channel shifting and now lay on the east bank, were formed into a separate *mahāl* called Haveli-shahr (now corrupted

* Cf. also *The Voyage to the East Indies*, John Huyghen van Linschoten, 1603, transl., pp. 94-7, chap. 16.

into *Halisahar* of the 24-Pargānas). Taking all three together, the city and its suburbs were assessed to a total revenue of 737,220 *dāms* (Rs. 18,430-8). In addition to this, custom duties and other taxes were levied, the port dues (*bandarbān*) and custom duties levied on booths (*mandari*) being roughly totalled at 1,200,000 *dāms* (Rs. 30,000).

Sātgaon was connected with the capital by a Pādshāhī road, which on the conquest of Orissa was extended to Mandāran, and is mentioned several times in the early annals of Akbar. Dāūd Khān in his first war against Akbar fled from Tanda to Sātgaon, and thence to Orissa. Muhammad Kuli Khān pursued him to Sātgaon, from which he invaded Jessore. Next Todar Māl followed the same route when marching to Mandāran. When Munim Khān died, Dāūd came by this road from Orissa and retook Tanda. Khān Juhān, after Dāūd's defeat and death at Aghmahal, moved to Tanda and thence to Sātgaon, where he defeated the remnant of the Afghān army and drove them back to Orissa. It was here too, that Dāūd's mother came to him as a suppliant. Sātgaon also appears in the account of the great military revolt, being taken by and retaken from the rebels.

About 1570, the Portuguese removed their factories to Hooghly, and the latter town rapidly superseded Sātgaon as a trading centre, so much so, that by the time Ralph Fitch visited this district (1587), and the *Ain* was compiled (*circa* 1590-92), Hooghly had come to be recognized as the chief port of South-West Bengal. Sātgaon, being more and more deserted by merchants, lost its sea-borne trade, but its inland trade lingered on for several years longer, as we find the English factors at Patna writing in 1620 about "quilts of Sutgonge," plain or wrought with yellow silk, being available for purchase in Patna.*

When Hooghly was captured by the forces of the Bengal Nawāb in 1632, all the public offices, including the custom-house, were removed to that place—the mint at Sātgaon had already ceased to work towards the end of Akbar's reign. After this, the town rapidly declined and soon fell into ruin; but its fame still survived in several later accounts, written in ignorance of the actual facts, *e.g.*, De Laet (1631), Peter Heyllyn (1652), Admiral Warwick (1667) and Thevenot (1668). This error may perhaps be explained by the fact that Sātgaon was sometimes confused with Hooghly, *e.g.*, Marshall wrote about 1676 that "great part of the Towne (Hooghly) was formerly called Satagam."† According to the Revd. J. Long "the old

* *English Factories in India, 1618-31*, Foster, pp. 195, 206.

† *Notes and observations*, p. 6, L. C. Bowrey, p. 167, note 2.

Dutch residents at Hooghly had their country seats at Satgan, and were in the habit of walking from Chinsura in the middle of the day to it and returning after dinner . . . The people of Satgan were famed for wit, and often contended for the palm of wit with the inhabitants of Mahmud Shah in the neighbourhood.'

Finally, with the ruin of the city, its name disappeared from the revenue accounts of Murshid Kuli Khan, the name Afsha alone being used for the *pargana* and for a small zamindari belonging to Raghudev, which after 1741 was annexed to the Burdwan zamindari. Sâtgaon is not shown in any maps subsequent to 1650 A. D., but in the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, again came into prominence owing to its paper manufacture. Considerable quantities of paper were exported to Hooghly town and to other districts of Bengal; but the industry declined owing to the introduction of paper manufacture in jails, and was killed by the import of the cheaper machine-made article.

Serampore (*Srirampur*, Srirâm's town).—Headquarters of the subdivision of the same name situated in 22° 45' N. and 88° 21' E. It lies on the right bank of the Hooghly river, midway between the towns of Hooghly and Howrah (12 miles from each). The branch Grand Trunk Road connects it with Howrah, and the Hooghly river with that town and Calcutta. Heavy goods are conveyed to and from the metropolis in big boats or barges towed by steam launches, and passengers in *pānsis* (small barges) or the Kālnā steamers of the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company. The town is also well served by rail. The East Indian Railway touches it and its suburbs at four stations, Konnagar, Rishrā, Serampore and Sheorāphuli; Serampore is a station at which all trains stop except the Bombay and Punjab mails. It can also be reached by the Eastern Bengal State Railway (on the other side of the Hooghly), on which there are three stations (Khardah, Titāgarh and Barrackpore) at distances of half a mile to a mile and half from the river. There are public ferries at six places, viz., (1) from Chātrā to Barrackpore, (2) Serampore to Barrackpore, (3) Ballabhpur to Titāgarh, (4) Māhesh to Titāgarh, (5) Rishra to Khardah, and (6) Konnagar to Pānihāti.

The municipality, which was constituted in 1865, is divided into four wards, viz., proceeding from north to south, (I) Chātrā, (II) Serampore, (III) Māhesh and Rishrā, and (IV) Konnagar. It has nearly doubled its population within 30 years, the numbers being 24,440 in 1872, 44,451 in 1901 and 49,594 in 1911. This increase is largely due to the influx of immigrants, chiefly males.

The large number of mills and other industrial concerns, the scarcity of local labour, and facilities of communication have attracted immigrants from up-country on a considerable scale, with the result that parts of the town have become overcrowded. Malarial fever is endemic, and cholera breaks out at times. A supply of good drinking water for the *bastis* and the area furthest away from the river, and an improved system of drainage are at present the crying needs of the town. A water-works scheme has been sanctioned and some progress has been made with a drainage scheme. The tracts worst drained are Ward No. III and those parts lying west of the Grand Trunk Road, where the drainage is obstructed by the East Indian Railway line.

Châtrâ

Châtrâ and Nabagram in the northernmost ward are more or less suburbs of Serampore proper. This ward lies, for the most part, between a road running along or near the river bank and the branch Grand Trunk Road, which meets the Grand Trunk Road at Ghireti. Châtrâ is a fairly old village, being shown as "Chatterah" in Rennell's Atlas, plate XIX (1781). It is inhabited by many Barendra Brahmans, and has a number of small shops on the river road.

Serampore.

South-east of Châtrâ, from which it is separated by a large *khal* or creek, is Serampore, the most important ward of the municipality. It is divisible into three sections, the northern, central and southern. The northern section is largely inhabited by Barendra Brahmans and contains the residences of the Barendra Gosâin family. It is separated from the central section by another *khal*, which falls into the river and is crossed by a small bridge.

The central section, which is the longest, the most thickly populated and the most important, contains the public offices. The old house of the Danish Governor with its large compound is utilized for the subdivisinal criminal courts and revenue offices. The building is two-storeyed, the upper storey serving as an inspection bungalow. Opposite the courts is the residence of the Subdivisinal Officer, a two-storeyed house of modern date, and to the left of this are the Civil Courts. Several other buildings are clustered together in the neighbourhood of the Criminal Courts, viz., the old Danish Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the sub-registry office and the post office. A little distance off is the sub-jail (formerly the Danish court-house and jail) with the date 1805 over the entrance gate. Near the railway station is the Mission cemetery containing the tombs of Carey, Marshman and Ward; and near the courts is the Danish cemetery. The Strand Road runs along the river bank for about a mile. Most

of the big houses in the town lie along this road, part of which is well-shaded with trees.

Serampore is one of the most interesting towns in Bengal, because its history is that of the attempt of the Danes to found a colonial empire, and later of English missionaries to establish the Christian religion in Bengal. The history of the Danes has already been given in Chapter III, and it will be sufficient to state here that when Serampore (Frederiksnagore) was ceded to the English by the treaty of 1845, the town had the following public buildings, (1) the Government House, (2) the Secretary's house and offices, (3) the court-house with the jail annexed, (4) the Church, (5) the bazar with godowns and (6) two small brick-built guard-houses on the river bank. The town was 60 *bighās* in area; and attached to it were the *mahāls* of Serampore, Akna and Piārāpur, for which the Danes paid to the zamīndār of Sheorāphuli an annual rent of *suds* Rs. 1,601.* This estate is now known as the Piārāpur estate of the Serampore *Khās Mahāls*.

As regards the Serampore missionaries, Carey, Marshman, Ward and their fellow-workers and successors, it will perhaps be sufficient to refer the reader to the account given in Chapter V and to quote the words of Mr. J. C. Marshman—"A feeling of solemnity pervades the mind in contemplating the spot where the first Missionary press was established; the first version of the Scriptures in the languages of this Presidency, and the first tract in the language of Bengal, was printed, and the first vernacular school opened; the first converted Hindu baptized, and the first steam engine ever seen in India set up, in order to manufacture paper for the printing of the sacred Scriptures

. . . Their remains now repose in the same hallowed ground in the Mission cemetery at Serampore, together with those of their highly gifted and affectionate associate, Mr. Mack."†

The following is a brief account of the principal buildings, beginning with the three Christian churches. The oldest is the Roman Catholic Church, which was built in 1776 with the help of contributions given by the rich Baretto family of Calcutta. It replaced a chapel (built in 1764), which was found too small for the congregation and was therefore pulled down. The Protestant church, which has a lofty steeple surmounted by a globe and cross, was formerly the Danish Church dedicated to St. Olaf. The gateway bears the monogram of Frederick VI of Denmark; and the

* Article II of the Treaty, *Toynbee's Sketch*, p. 168.

† Notes on the Right Bank of the Hooghly, *Calcutta Review*, Vol. IV, pp. 500, 502.

altar or communion table is at the west end. It was built by public subscriptions obtained through the exertions of Colonel Bie, and was completed in 1805 at an expense of Rs. 18,500. Of this sum, Rs. 1,000 was contributed by the Marquis of Wellesley, who is said to have remarked at the time that nothing was wanting to the Barrackpore Park but the distant view of a steeple. Mr. Marshman writing in 1845 stated:—"No service has ever been performed in it by a Danish clergyman in consequence of the capture of the town by the English soon after its erection, and the small body of Danes resident in it subsequently to the restoration of the town. The service has been gratuitously conducted by the Serampore Missionaries, and their colleague Mr. Mack, during the long period of thirty-seven years. The only property belonging to the Church consists of a pair of large silver candlesticks presented in 1803 by Mrs. Schow."* The third church is the Mission Chapel, purchased by Dr. Carey and his colleagues in 1800, in which they and Mr. Mack preached for 45 years.

One of the most interesting memorials of these Missionaries is the College, which they founded in 1818. The building has been described as follows by Mr. J. C. Marshman, c.s.i., a son of Dr. Marshman:—"The centre building intended for the public rooms was 130 feet in length and 120 in depth. The hall on the ground floor, supported on arches, and terminated at the south by a bow, was 95 feet in length, 66 in breadth, and 20 in height. It was originally intended for the library, but is now occupied by the classes. The hall above, of the same dimensions and 26 feet in height, was supported by two rows of Ionic columns; it was intended for the annual examinations. Of the twelve side rooms above and below, eight were of spacious dimensions, 27 feet by 35. The portico, which fronted the river, was composed of four columns, more than 4 feet in diameter at the base. The staircase room was 90 feet in length, 27 in width and 47 in height, with two staircases of cast-iron, of large size and elegant form, prepared at Birmingham. The spacious grounds were surrounded with an iron railing, and the front entrance was adorned with a noble gate likewise cast at Birmingham." The College contains the library and several relics of the Serampore missionaries, such as the pulpit from which they preached, their chairs, Carey's crutches, translations from the Bible and the royal charter of the College granted by the King of Denmark in 1827. One picture in this

building was long believed to be a portrait of Madame Grand (later Princess Talleyrand) by Zoffany, but it is really a picture of Princess Augusta, sister of Frederick V of Denmark. Adjoining the college is the house in which Dr Carey lived for many years and died.

Not far off, in the premises of the Howrah waterworks, are two buildings known as "Aldeen House" and the Pagoda. The former, which is now used as a residence by the engineers attached to the waterworks, was once the property and favourite retreat of the Revd. David Brown, as related in Chapter V; it has been suggested that the house was built by some Muhammadans during the period of Mughal rule and that it was used for the purposes of religion (*Din*). The latter was formerly a temple of Rādhāballabh, which was purchased by Mr. Brown after it had been abandoned and the image removed owing to the encroachment of the river. "In this cool old Pāgoda Henry Martyn, on one of his earliest visits to "Aldeen" after his arrival as a chaplain in 1806, found an appropriate residence. Under the vaulted roof of the shrine a place of prayer and praise was fitted up with an organ, so that, as he wrote, 'the place where once devils were worshipped has now become a Christian oratory.' . . . As years went by, the temple thus consecrated as a Christian oratory became degraded in other hands. The brand "Pagoda Distillery" for a time came to be known as marking the rum manufactured there. The visits of so many Christian pilgrims to the spot, and above all the desire expressed by Lord Lawrence when Governor-General to visit it, led the wealthy Hindu family who own the Pagoda to leave it at last as a simple ruin."* It has lately been restored by Government and a memorial tablet placed on it.

Near the railway station is the Mission Cemetery containing the graves of Carey and his family, the vault of the Marshmans and the graves of Ward and Mack, 'the beloved associate.' "No burying ground in India is consecrated with four such tombs." The Danish cemetery contains tombs dating back to 1781, among which may be mentioned those of Colonel Krefting, the Danish Chief and Director who died in 1828 after 44 years' service in India, of Hohlenbergh, another Danish Governor (1833), and of General Mainwaring, author of a dictionary of the Lepcha language, who died at Serampore in 1893.

Near the Howrah waterworks the river makes a bend towards Ballābh- the south-west, and brings Ballābhpur into view. - This quarter of Bar.

* J. Smith, C.I.E., LL.B., *Life of William Carey*.

Serampore is semi-urban in character and is known chiefly for its temple, of Rādhāballabh and Rath-Jātrā. The following legend is told about the origin of the idol and temple. "About eight generations ago, Rudru Pandit, who was related to a family of distinction at Chātrā, a mile to the west of Serampore, forsook the family mansion and retired to Ballabhpur, which was then a forest, where he began a series of religious austerities. The gods are never indifferent to such acts of devotion, and Rādhāballabh himself is said to have appeared to him in the form of a religious mendicant, and given him instructions to proceed to Gaur, the capital of Bengal, and obtain a slab or stone which adorned the doorway of the Viceroy's private room, and construct an image out of it. He proceeded to that city and found that the Prime Minister and favourite of the Viceroy was a devoted Hindu. To him he announced the revelation he had received, and was assured that no effort should be spared to obey the commands of the God.

"Soon after, the stone began to emit drops of water and, by a singular coincidence, the Viceroy himself happened to pass by at the time. The minister pointed out the circumstance, and asserted that the drops thus distilled were the tears of the stone, and that no time should be lost in delivering the palace from so inauspicious an omen, by the removal of this object. Permission was immediately given to this effect, and Rudru was blessed with the gratification of his wishes. But he was greatly perplexed about the means of removing this treasure, when the God again appeared, and directed him to return forthwith to Ballabhpur, and there await in patience the arrival of the stone. Soon after he had reached his village, it was miraculously conveyed to the river side, and floated down the stream of its own accord to the landing stairs at Ballabhpur, where the devotee was in the habit of bathing.

"Rudru set to work immediately on the stone, and by the aid of the sculptor obtained an image, which is celebrated for its beauty. The mysterious origin of the image soon attracted worshippers, and the proprietor was enabled, from their gifts, to construct the temple. In process of time, the encroachments of the river brought the temple within 300 feet of the edge of the water, and it became necessary to seek some other abode for the God, because no Brāhman is allowed to receive a professional gift or meal within that distance of the sacred stream. The forsaken temple was subsequently purchased by the Reverend David Brown, and the image was removed to another spot, a quarter of a mile inland, where a temple was built at the expense of the wealthy family of the Mallik of Calcutta.

"The splendour of Rādhāballabh's establishment is, however, of more recent origin than the celebrity of the image. • Rājā Nubukissen of Calcutta, the Munshi of Clive, and the first native who rose to wealth and distinction after the birth of the British empire in India, took a great fancy to this god. When he was called to perform the funeral obsequies of his mother, he employed the great influence he enjoyed in the country, to convey to his own residence in the metropolis the three images to which Agradwip, Chardah and Ballabhpur owe their distinction. They were carried down to the river on a stage, on the shoulders of Brahmans—for it would be an act of sacrilege for any but the twice born to touch an image inhabited by the spirit of the Gods—and were conveyed from the ghāt in Calcutta to the Rājā's residence on the same sacerdotal shoulders. Soon after, he dismissed two of the images, but retained that of Rādhāballabh for a twelvemonth, and exhibited a strong indisposition to part with it. He offered large sums of money to the priests—according to popular report, to the extent of Rs. 10,000 or Lts. 12,000—for permission to keep it; but they refused to part with the heirloom of their family. They importuned him for its restoration, time after time, but without success. An appeal to the courts of law would at once have secured its return, but such a proceeding would have reflected dishonour on them throughout the country. At length, they threatened the Rājā and his family with a more fearful calamity than a law suit in the Supreme Court,—with the curse of the Brāhmans. These menaces are said to have reached the Rājā's wife, who besought him to send away an image which was likely to prove so inauspicious to the family, and he was persuaded to relinquish it. At the same time, he gave the most substantial proofs of his generosity to its proprietors by endowing them with the village of Ballabhpur, which is supposed to yield them an annual income of about Rs. 800 a year. The patronage of so distinguished a character as Rājā Nubukissen tended greatly to increase the popularity of the shrine, and, it is now one of the most wealthy in this part of the country."

Formerly the image of Jagannāth, which is enshrined at Māhesh, a mile south, used to be brought to "visit" that of Rādhāballabh at Ballabhpur during the car festival; but owing to disputes between the priests of the two temples, another image of Jagannāth was set up at Ballabhpur.

In this ward the Bārendra Brāhmans, with the Gosains at their head, and the Tantis or weaver caste, are prominent. The

latter are a quiet hardworking class, whose fine cloths, known as *Famaḍāṅgā* cloths, still hold their own in the markets of Calcutta and Howrah; they use an improved loom known as the Serampore loom. A Government institution for the training of weavers has recently been established here. During the period of British rule two families of this locality have come to the front, viz., the Deys and the Gosāins. The Deys belong to the Teli caste, originally a caste of oilmen, but now mostly of traders. They obtained their wealth chiefly by establishing a private sub-monopoly of salt in the days when the general monopoly was held by the East India Company, and then acquired landed property by taking up mortgages and by purchase. Their dispute with the Sheorāphuli Rāj about the bathing of Jagannāth at Mahesh during the Snān-jātrā has been already described in the account of Baidyabāti in the article on Sheoraphuli.

Gosāin
family

The Gosāins or Goswamis, the leading family in the town, trace back their descent to Dharādhār, son of Chāndar, who was one of the five Brāhmins said to have been brought by the king Adisur from Kanauj. The original seat of the family was at Pātuli, an old place on the right bank of the river Bhāgirathī above Kātwā in the Burdwān district, which was also the original home of the founders of the Bānsberia and Sheorāphuli Rāj. Lakshman Chakravarti married into the Gosāin family of Sāntipur in Nadiā, an influential family descended from the great scholar Adwaita, the colleague of Chaitanya. Lakshman's son Rām-govinda succeeded to the zamīndārī and other properties of his maternal uncle and assumed his title of Gosāin. It is said that one day, his boat having upset, he had to swim ashore to Serampore and, attracted by the place, settled here permanently. Not improbably he was also attracted by the fact that the younger branch of the Patuli zamīndārs resided at Sheorāphuli. He got grants of lands from the Sheorāphuli Rāj, and the Rājā of Bishnupur appointed him *seḍāit* of three idols, Rādhāmohan, Rādhikā and Gopāl, which he had endowed with rent-free lands; these idols are now the family idols of the Gosāins. Rāmgovinda was thus the founder of the Serampore family.

Rāmgovinda's youngest son, Harinārāyan, became *Diwān* of Customs under the Danish East India Company. At that time (1773-83) the trade of Serampore was at its zenith, and Harinārāyan amassed a large fortune. His younger son Raghurām was "banian" to the great firm of Mr. John Palmer, styled "the Prince of Merchants." The firm failed in 1832, involving many persons in ruin, but it is said that Palmer gave a timely hint to Raghurām, who was thus able to realize his securities.

Raghurām also traded largely on his own account, both before and after the failure of Palmer and Co., and was a large shareholder in the Union Bank, an Indian bank started by the late Dwārkanāth Tagore. This bank also failed, but before it suspended payment Raghurām had sold his shares. He thus saved himself from the misfortune which befell Dwārkanāth Tagore, Chhātū and Lālā Bābus, and other prominent persons of Calcutta. Raghurām purchased extensive zamindāris and acquired such wealth, that when the Danish King offered to sell Serampore to the English in 1845, he offered to buy it for twelve lakhs of rupees; but this was not allowed by the English Government. He died a millionaire, and was the real architect of the present fortunes of the Gosāin family.

Raghurām's two surviving sons, Gangā Prasād and Gopi Krishna, inherited the property. Gopi Krishna was a pious and orthodox Hindu, who travelled much on pilgrimage, and endowed the family gods with lands yielding a net income of Rs 14,000. This amount is still spent on the worship of the gods and on charitable purposes. Gangā Prasād had one son, Hem Chandra, who died in 1907, leaving four daughters, who inherited his large property under a will. Gopi Krishna had five sons, of whom three are now living, Kisori Lal, Rājendra Lal and Rādhikā Lal. The Hon'ble Rai Kisori Lal Goswami Bahadur is the head of this younger branch. He is a Vakil of the High Court, was Chairman of the Serampore Municipality, and is now (1911) a member of the Executive Council of Bengal. During his time the landed property has been considerably developed, especially the zamindari at Kankināra in the 24 Parganas, by the opening of jute mills.*

South of Ballābhpur along the river bank is Mahesh, and still further south is Rishrā. Mahesh is famous for its temple of Jagannāth, and for the annual festivals of Snān-jātrā (bathing festival), Rath-jātrā (car festival) and Ultā-rath (the return festival), which attract immense crowds to the town: in fact, the Rath-jātrā of Mahesh is the largest festival of its kind in India outside Puri. The following legend is told about this shrine. An ascetic of Mahesh named Dhrubānanda Brahmachāri went on a pilgrimage to Puri, where the god Jagannāth came to him in a dream, bidding him return to Mahesh, where he promised to appear to him. After his return Dhrubānanda found an image of Jagannāth partly hidden in sand on the bank of the Ganges. A few

* Most of the facts above given are taken from a note kindly supplied by the Hon'ble Rai Kisori Lal Goswami Bahadur.

days later he found the images of Subhadra and Baladeb in the same place, and having set them up by the side of the image of Jagannāth, made over the three images to his disciple Kamalākar Piplāi. Some years afterwards a Nawāb of Murshidābād, having been given shelter during a storm by the *sebaits* of the shrine, gave them a piece of revenue-free land in Māhesh and the title of Adhikāri. The Māhesh temple rapidly grew in importance. A wealthy Madak dedicated the first car, and a zamīudār of Sheorāphuli gave the Adhikaris the village of Jagannāthpur, as *debottar* land.

Another legend says that the god Jagannāth stopped and bathed at Mahesh on his way to Puri, where he dined. Hence the place became sacred, and all the Puri ceremonies were introduced. The present temple was built by the Calcutta Malliks, while the car was the gift of the Boses. About 1835 the old car was found to be unsafe on account of decay and the ravages of white ants, and it was therefore replaced by the present iron car. During the Rath-jatrā festival the safety of the vehicle is first certified by the District Engineer, and a cordon is formed, by means of a rope held up by constables, to prevent the crowd getting too near. The image is next placed on the car, and amid much rejoicing and shouting the car is drawn by hawsers to the God's garden-house in the north of Mahesh. After eight days, on the Uṭā-rath day, the car with the image is drawn back to its old place, whence the image is carried to the temple.

Māhesh is an old place mentioned in the poem of Bipra Dās (1495 A. D.) and in the poem on the legend of Satyanārayan (18th century). The worship of Jagannāth may be assumed to be several centuries old, and not improbably began when this part of the country was under the Oriya kings.

Rishra.

Rishra is a thriving quarter with two large jute mills (Wellington and Hastings), which are connected with the Rishra station by a siding. The majority of the mill-hands live on the other side of the Trunk Road in a *basti* situated on *Kāś Mahāl* land. They get their drinking water from hydrants supplied with filtered water by the mills, and a large private market supplies them with provisions.

Rishra appears to be as old as Māhesh, being mentioned in the poem of Bipra Dās (1495 A. D.), but first rose to importance during the early days of British rule. On the south bank of the Chāmpā Khāl, a creek that separated this place from Māhesh, stood Rishra House, where Warren Hastings and his wife used to come and stay. It was surrounded by a brick-wall, the western portion of which was lined with a row of mango trees said to have been planted by Mrs. Hastings. When Hastings retired, he sold

the house and adjoining land (136 *bighas*), receiving twice as much as he had paid for it. It now forms part of the buildings of the Hastings Mill; and the original deed, bearing the signature of the great Pro Consul, is in the possession of the mill proprietors.

South of Rishrā is the eastern ward, Konnagar. It is rather sparsely inhabited, but has developed of recent years, chiefly owing to the existence of the chemical works of Meesra, Waldie and Co., and the efforts of the late B. bu Trailakya Nāth Mittra. The latter was a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court and Chairman of the Serampore Municipality, who improved Konnagar considerably and left a large fortune. Konnagar is mentioned in the poem of Bipra Dās (1495), but first rose to importance with the growth of European trade. In 1845 it was described as a populous and wealthy village, the residence of many natives who had amassed or were amassing wealth in Calcutta. In fact, like Serampore and Rishrā, it formed a suburban retreat for the well-to-do people of the metropolis. Now, however, the place has lost its reputation for healthiness.

Serampore Subdivision.—A subdivision lying in the south-east of the district between 22° 40' and 22° 55' N. and 87° 59' and 88° 22' E. with an area of 343 square miles. It is bounded by the rivers Hooghly and Damodar and intersected by many streams and *khalas* with long swamps lying between the main streams. The country is low and rather flat, but rises gradually towards the Damodar river, and the streams drain the country from north and north-west to south and south-east. Though the slope is more pronounced than in the Sadar subdivision, still the streams mostly become silted up after the rains, leaving numerous pools of stagnant water in their beds. The subdivision consequently becomes water-logged, and towards the end of the rains malarious. Thāna Krishnanagar is the worst in this respect, and then thāna Haripāl, or roughly the south-western portion of the subdivision; in Krishnanagar thāna the population decreased from 69,280 in 1872 to 57,694 in 1901. On the other hand, the lands are fertile, especially those enriched by silt deposits from the Hooghly and its branch, the Saraswati. The chief crops are paddy, potatoes, jute, vegetables and fruits, sugarcane and oilseeds. The manufacture of cotton cloths has survived at Serampore and Haripāl, and the dyeing of silk handkerchiefs at Serampore. Large quantities of bricks and tiles are manufactured along the banks of the Hooghly, and pottery

* *Sections from the Calcutta Gazette*, Vol. I, p. 49. (Auction notice, under date 5th August 1871.)

at Bhadreswar. The jute and cotton mills in Serampore, Bhadreswar and Baidyabāti have already been referred to. The population of the subdivision was 413,178 in 1901, representing 1,205 persons to the square mile.

Sheorāphuli.—See Baidyabāti.

Singur.—A village in the Serampore subdivision and the headquarters of a police station. It is connected with Baidyabāti by a District Board road, but is more easily accessible by the Tarakeswar branch of the East Indian Railway, a station being located here. It has a sub-registry office, a post office, a High English school, and a *tal* teaching *smṛiti* or law. The headquarters of the thāna was transferred from Baidyabāti to Singur in 1878. It was notorious in the early days of British rule for dacoities and robberies.

Sitāpur.—A village in thāna Krishnanagar of the Serampore subdivision. It is connected with Antpur by a District Board road, but can be reached more easily by the Chāmpādāngā extension of the Howrah-Amtā Light Railway. It is one of the centres of the Musalmān population in the district, and contains a *madrasa* which is supported by a Government grant. This grant owes its origin to an assignment of Rs 4-8 a day made in 1772 by Governor Cartier, which was increased to Rs. 5 by Warren Hastings in 1781.* The *Mutawālī* draws at present Rs. 158-13-5 a month, three-fourths of which is appropriated to the *madrasa* and one-fourth to the mosque. He is said to be a lineal descendant of Maulana Makhdum Jamāl Bagdadi, who came to India in the reign of Akbar, and whose eldest son Makhdum Sāh Abdullah Abdul is said to have settled at Sitāpur on the left bank of the Kānā Dāmodar. His second brother settled at Phurphurā and the youngest brother at Midnapore.

Syāmbazar.—A village in thāna Goghāt on the extreme western border of the Arāmbāgh subdivision, close to the boundary of the Bānkurā district. It is one mile east of Badanganj outpost and is reached by a loop road beginning from and ending in the Old Nāgpur road. The village contains a mud-walled thatched bungalow of the District Board, and a sub-registry office. From 1877 to 1885 it was the head-quarters of a Municipal Union. It is the centre of the tussar-spinning and tussar-weaving industries, the fabrics being all exported either to the *hats* of Rāmjibanpur or Rāmkrishnapur or bought by dealers from Orissa and up-country. Some trade is also carried on in ebony articles.

Tarakeswar.—An important village in thāna Haripāl of the Serampore subdivision, situated in 22° 53' N. and 88° 2' E. It

* Toynbee's *Administration of the Hooghly District*. Im. 112-20.

is connected with Baidyabāti by a District Board road 21 miles long, of which 10 miles are metalled; but it can be reached easily from Calcutta by the Tārakeswar branch line of the East Indian Railway starting from the Sheorāphuli station and from up-country by the Bengal Provincial Railway starting from the Magrā station. Tārakeswar is, in fact, the terminus of the two lines. It contains a police outpost, a District Board bungalow, a small dispensary maintained by the Mahant of the temple, and two *tole*, which receive aid from the Mahant and are therefore sometimes called Mahant Mahārāj *tole*.

The chief object of interest is the shrine of the linga of the god Siva called Tārakeswar, which is about 500 yards from the railway station. This shrine consists of two parts, the sanctum and the verandah or porch in front of it. The sanctum is plain inside, with the linga in the middle. Its outside is carved like a Bengali hut and has a duplicate with three spires over it. The porch is four-sided, with three arched cusped openings, and the floor has a marble pavement; it is about 25 feet square and 30 feet high, with a railing over the roof. Facing this porch is a large open hall with a roof supported by pillars and a floor paved with marble. The temple is so much surrounded by houses on all sides that no good view of it can be obtained from outside. The Mahant lives in a house to the east, and to the north of the temple is a fair-sized tank much used by pilgrims. Close by is a large bazar, which is paved with flagstones; and near the bazar is a fine tank.

Pilgrims come to the shrine throughout the year and on all the days of the week, but Monday is the favourite day, as it is considered the day most auspicious to Siva. Several religious festivals are held periodically, the largest crowds assembling on the Siva-rātri and Charak Sankrānti days. The Siva-rātri (the night of Siva) is held on the night of the fourteenth *tithi* of the dark fortnight in the month of Phālgun (February-March). At this time a fair takes place which lasts for three days, and on the night itself 20,000 persons gather at the shrine. Charak Sankrānti, or the last day of Chaitra, takes place at present on 13th April, which is also the last day of the Bengali year; on this occasion men swing from high poles. Throughout the month of Chaitra Sūdras fast during the day-time, taking their meals only after sunset, as in the Ramazān fast of the Muhammadans. On the Charak Sankrānti day they assemble at Tārakeswar, deposit their orange-coloured strips of cloth (*uttariya*) before the god and offer prayers to him, fasting both day and night. Locally, this festival is the most important, some 15,000 to 25,000 persons

visiting the temple during it. The *mela* held in connection with the festival lasts five to six days.

The village is not old nor is the shrine. The place is not shown in Rennell's Atlas (1779-81), but appears in the Survey maps of 1830-45 as Taressure. Regarding its origin, the following curious legend is told. Rājā Vishnu Dās, a Kshatriya by caste, lived, at Mohaba Garkalingar in Oudh, early in the eighteenth century. Rather than remain under the rule of the Musalmān Nawābs of Oudh, the Rājā emigrated to Bengal, and took up his abode at the village of Rāmnapur at Balāgarh, near Haripāl, about two miles from where Tārakeswar now stands. With him came 500 followers of his own caste, and 100 Brāhmins from Kanauj. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood suspected them of being robbers, and sent word to the Nawāb of Bengal at Murshidābād that a large gang of marauders, in complete armour and with strange beards and moustaches, had come and settled near Haripāl. The Nawāb having sent for them, the Rājā presented himself, and said that they were harmless folk who only wanted some land whereon to settle. Tradition states that, to prove his innocence, Rājā Vishnu Dās went through the ordeal by fire, holding in his hand a red-hot iron bar, without sustaining injury. The Nawāb was convinced of his honesty and gave him a grant of 500 *bighās* of land (equal to 1,500 *bighās* at the present day) eight miles from Tārakeswar.

Vishnu Dās had a brother, who became a religious mendicant and wandered about the neighbourhood as a devotee. While living in the jungle near Tārakeswar, then known as Jot Savaram, he noticed that many cows entered the jungle with udders full of milk, and returned with them empty. Varamal Singh, as the devotee was called, followed them to see who milked them, and saw them discharge milk of their own accord on to a stone which had a deep hollow in it, made by cowherds grinding rice. He tried to dig up the stone, and spent a whole day at the work without reaching its lower side. During the night he dreamed that Tārakeswar (a form of Siva) appeared to him and ordered him not to dig up the stone, but to build over it a temple, of which he should be the *Mahant*. Varamal Singh then went and related his dream to his brother Vishnu Dās, whose help he asked. The two brothers accordingly built the temple of Tārakeswar over the sacred stone, and Varamal Singh became its first *Mahant*. The original temple having fallen into decay, the present building was erected by the Rājā of Burdwan. Chintamani Dey of Howrah is said to have erected the marble hall in front of the shrine in gratitude for having been

miraculously cured of disease in answer to prayer offered at the shrine.

The management of the temple is in the hands of a *Mahant* or abbot, who enjoys its revenue during his life-time. The landed estates yield an annual income of Rs. 16,000, and the value of the offerings is said to come to a lakh of rupees; while the expenditure is estimated to be Rs. 5,000 a month. The *Mahant* is a celibate of the *Dasnami* order of *sannyasis*, and is selected from the *chelas* or disciples by other *Mahants* of the order.

Tribeni.—A place of pilgrimage forming the northernmost part of Bānsberia town (v. Bānsberia).

Uttarpāra. (*Uttar*, north, and *pāra* quarter).—A small town on the right bank of the Hooghly in the Serampore thāna and subdivision situated in 22° 40' N. and 88° 21' E. Population (1911) 7,373. It is reached from Calcutta by boats and steamers and also from two stations on the East Indian Railway, Bally and Uttarpāra. The town extends along the river bank for about half a mile, the main road being the branch Grand Trunk Road from Howrah, which is metalled and fairly wide throughout. Among the public institutions may be mentioned a police outpost, Government dispensary, public library and the Uttarpāra College. All these lie between the Grand Trunk Road and the river, while the municipal office is situated on the opposite side of that road. The municipality was constituted in 1865 and is the smallest in area in the district. The public library is rich in old books on India, consisting in part of the library formed by the *Hurkaru* newspaper in the first half of the 19th century. It is located in a fine building of the Italian style, which has an imposing appearance from the river. Originally formed by the late Babu Jayakrishna Mukherji, it is now managed by trustees, one of whom is his son, Rājā Piyari Mohan Mukherji. The famous Bengali Christian poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt stopped in this house for a few months before his death in June 1873. Sanskrit law is studied in two *toles*.

The town is fairly neat and clean, and has a large number of *pucca* houses. It owes its progress largely to the late Rājā Jayakrishna Mukherji and his relatives. Among the private buildings, the houses of Rājā Piyari Mohan and of Babus Rās Bihari Mukherji and Jyot Kumār Mukherji are worth mentioning; among other residents, may be mentioned Mr. Justice Pramada Charan Banerji of the Allahābād High Court, a connection of the same Mukherji family.

Jayakrishna Mukherji, who was born in 1808, became at the age of 16 a regimental clerk of the 14th Foot, for which his

father was commissariat contractor. Both father and son took part in the siege of Bharatpur in 1825, and having obtained a considerable sum as their share of prize-money, invested their savings in landed property in the Hooghly district. In 1830, the Collector, Mr. W. H. Belli, appointed Jayakrishna record-keeper, but this post he lost a few years later. At that time the Board's order directing that the Dutch *pattas* of the Chinsura *Khas Mahals* were to be surrendered and replaced by English leases was being enforced, and many ryots charged Jayakrishna with taking bribes on the issue of the latter. The Commissioner, after holding an enquiry, dismissed Jayakrishna and the Nazir in 1836. It should be added that Mr. Toynbee, after studying the voluminous correspondence on the subject, has no hesitation in stating his belief that Jayakrishna was the victim of a conspiracy on the part of the Chinsura ryots and that the charges brought against him were not substantiated. Jayakrishna gradually acquired large landed properties, chiefly by buying estates at the auction sales of the Revenue and Civil Courts, where his intimate knowledge of the Collectorate record-room proved invaluable. Popularly he was known as the Jarāsondha of Hooghly district, and there was hardly any large public movement in which he did not take part. He did a great deal for his own town where he founded the College, the library and (practically) the dispensary. In his old age he became blind, and he died in 1888.

His son Piyāri Mohan Mukherji, who was born in 1840, has been a member of the Legislative Council of Bengal (in 1879 and 1906), and a member of the India Legislative Council (in 1884 and 1886). He is Vice-President of the British Indian Association, and has several times been its President; like his father, he has taken an active part in public movements. In February 1887 he was given the title of Rājā and made a C. S. I. in recognition of his own and his father's services.

Babu Rajkrishna Mukherji was associated with his brother Jayakrishna in founding various local institutions, notably the college, the dispensary and the library of Uṭṭarpārā. He left a large landed property to his son Harihar Mukherji, who, however, died at an early age and was succeeded by the present owner, his son, Babu Jyot Kumar Mukherji. The rental of his landed property in Howrah was immensely increased by the Rājapur drainage scheme, to the cost of which he contributed Rs. 2,65,000.

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